

GloMag

gloMag

*Monthly Online Poetry and Prose  
Magazine*

*August 2017*



*Edited and Published by Glory Sasikala*

## **Jonel Scholtz**



### **Title of the Cover Pic: Sega Vibe**

With "sega vibe" I just wanted to convey the rhythm and vibrancy of the sega dance together with the rich traditions of the creole people of Mauritius. Overall I really just paint to survive my demons. Behind my easel is my sacred place. Other people go to church or pray...this is my prayer.

**Website:** <http://www.jonelscholtz.co.za/>

### **About The Artist**

Jonel Scholtz obtained a Baccalaureus Scientiae degree in Chemistry and Biochemistry from the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, in 1994. She started painting in 1988, while in high school, with Louise Goudemand, an American born artist, specializing in figurative work and oil portraits. She has exhibited in South Africa in Johannesburg

(Alice Art Gallery), Clarens (The Gallery), Cape Town (Marzé Botha Art Gallery), Swellendam (Die Kunstehuijs), Hartebeespoort Dam ( Old Masters, Chris Tugwell) and Dullstroom (Branko Dimitrov Art Gallery). Internationally Jonel Scholtz has exhibited at the Agora Gallery, New York; Art Fusion Gallery in Miami, at the Castello Estense in Ferrara in Italy, NY at the International Expo in 2010 and the United Nations as part of International Women's Day.

### **Artist Statement**

I have so much baggage and hang-ups. I think if I had to live without art, it would be dangerous. I realise not everybody would understand this. I do not set out to make art every day, that would be idiotic. I just set out to be happy. What can I say about my paintings? I think they are moments in the past captured on canvas. They should have dissipated into the past, but I dragged them back into the present. I cannot explain them to you, that is your job. Mine is just to make you see your soul through my work. I have been lost so many times and realised that getting back is the actual journey. You grow as an artist and ultimately your world changes as well as your work. I try to dance to the radio, sing in the shower, eat cake, cry and laugh and laugh and laugh, but most of all love - every day. And that is all I need to do.

## **ABOUT GLOMAG**

GloMag is the coming together of writers in their diverse manifestations, thoughts, and expressions, and the visual interpretation of these. Sometimes the original thought of the writer gets completely lost in the interpretations. Visual aids help us to decipher the writer's intentions, and at the same time, enhance the reading experience. Perhaps you are sitting in solitude beneath a bough, besides a lake, and you turn the pages. The thoughts capture you, time stands still, and you become engrossed, oblivious to anything but these beautiful writings, expressions, and pictures. Your soul dances in ecstasy, participates in a cosmic experience, it sways and chants. Somewhere someone is telling you about duality, someone tells you about a forlorn house without music, someone shows you how to love, and someone raises questions about existence itself.

And when you come to, the world is still there, the lake is still there, the birds are chirping, shadows have lengthened. Nothing feels the same! You are not the same! You get up reluctantly. It's time to go home.

~ **Glory Sasikala**

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**BACKGROUND MUSIC: “The Laendler” instrumental.**

## PREFACE

**Ampat Varghese Koshy**

(I am the son of a poet)



I have been giving a few lectures on literature recently. I wanted to discuss what seemed apt for this magazine which is chock full of poems and other articles, along with visual accompaniments, correlating it with the thoughts generated as residue by those lectures. As a digital magazine that makes use of music and gives visual representations of poems, besides its other features, Glomag is a gentle hybrid between the fine arts and literature. Thus, it raises the very questions I want to address.

Sartre asked, 'What is literature?' I do, too, but in a different context. Now. Here. Wherever that 'here' is. It

may seem sometimes that we live in a post-modern world where the abundance of such publications offers us too much to process. The result is that we often become consumers and not thinking readers. The larger questions elude us.

Creativity in assigning or making value stops with reading, unlike in the art market, and does not progress to talking of what is read, nowadays, in these circumstances. The shift that has occurred is that value is now assigned in a different way, by non-academia, from the earlier one of critical analysis, to such efforts. Meanwhile, sub-cultures are often subsumed under the bracket of not being a grand narrative, thus automatically being post-modern, though lacking at the same time a meta-narrative to give it weight. My preface is such a meta-narrative, as it asks again, ‘what is literature?’ What are its prospects? What are its problems and puzzles? What is the paradigm shift it is undergoing presently?

We know that literature, like writing, is an indistinct signifier. However, it is different from writing in that its referent is the whole universe of meaning. The author is only part of this referent, after the act of writing, and we know too that what is written has no signified except the reactions to it, but unlike others I am conscious of a hesitation in myself in saying there is no such thing as low

art or high art or good writing and bad writing. In fact, increasingly it has occurred to me that I need to stand as some kind of bulwark against total subjectivity and objectivity, as well as total relativity and absolutism as a critic. In other words, while agreeing that the definition of literature is subject to change periodically I want the change to happen gradually over a long period of time with a stability in the midst of the flux and not belong to the camps of those who say everything is literature or nothing is.

These lines from Eliot's Four Quartets/Little Gidding come to mind, resultantly:

For last year's words belong to last year's language

And next year's words await another voice.

...Since our concern was speech, and speech impelled us

To purify the dialect of the tribe

And urge the mind to aftersight and foresight"

We concern ourselves with speech, voice and language (in written form) though "purify" is not a word I would use as we want to explore the full gamut of expression and communication by inclusion but we also need standards. We speak for an age and all of the future and to and for all

people and of all places and times when we do this. If we do it interestingly enough and luck is with us it remains.

What belongs to today? A new discourse definitely. The reader reigns here certainly, and not the author or text or critic, but through likes, views, comments and shares, and it is only indirectly through this that we come to understand what the signifier or literature of today means to them and what they think is their referent or their signified. In other words, now we see through a different glass, and have to find out what it means almost as if learning a new language of literary criticism.

Once this is apprehended, writers would actually make more progress, meaning once they understand the bitcoin of the appreciation of today, aka our new online critical currency.

So, to return to literature. It is not just writing as expression, it has to be something more enhanced, at least refined expression, not existing in a vacuum, and while it is fluid it has its own parameters.

Andrei Tarkovsky says in Sculpting in Time:

“My objective is to create my own world and these images which we create mean nothing more than the images which they are. We have forgotten how to relate

emotionally to art: we treat it like editors, searching in it for that which the artist has supposedly hidden. It is actually much simpler than that, otherwise art would have no meaning. You have to be a child—incidentally children understand my pictures very well, and I haven't met a serious critic who could stand knee-high to those children. We think that art demands special knowledge; we demand some higher meaning from an author, but the work must act directly on our hearts or it has no meaning at all."

We can maybe keep this as the first truism, that the work must act directly on our hearts, or it is not literature at all.

Having said that, literature has changed due to technology. In this new scenario of Twitterature, blogs, Facebook, etc., etc., literature is a balancing act between the need to interact with sensitive readers and not to compromise on what one really wants to write. This is especially so in a world mushrooming constantly with new interactive media, hyper media and mixed media, and those subcultures.

In a world of democratization where everybody is a writer who publishes his work or self publishes it and gets read, the vanishing margin between high and low touted by the very nature of the media tends to leave one bewildered as to what to read. It also puts a lot of pressure on writers as they often fear being ignored. This leads to a manipulation

of the media to grab attention, on the one hand, and value-making attempts that may or may not be on target. Value is made by making sense consistently, therefore, first to one's own soul and then sticking around long enough in the field you choose to make your mark in, so your writing begins to matter to others too. The same rule goes for those writing aficionados who want their writing to cross over into being considered as literature.

The problems that new writers face include navigating a minefield of mainstream, accepted notions and brands of what consists of literature in the minds of the majority, along with doing their own thing. The latter would consist of the efforts behind this kind of magazine, while the former would be made up of trying to get published in, say, the Times Literary Supplement. Those who read both critically and analytically, with open minds, will find pieces in here as enchanting as those in TLS, but cowed by a fear of the mob, they may not voice this truth. Breaking through such barriers is one of the major problems off-beat or underground writers have to deal with. The other issues faced are appearing in print, in bookstores, getting noticed by the press, meaningful reviews and sales, and getting stocked in noted libraries.

Genre bending happens at such a bewildering pace nowadays that the creative writer finds it exhilarating. But

every writer knows that it is risky. Vikram Seth carried it off in Golden Gate. Santosh Bakaya has in Ballad of Bapu. My own experience is that readers who matter love it, but publishers are often not ready to take risks. This is where magazines like Glomag are or can do a yeoman service, in discovering and fostering new, experimental writers and Glory Sasikala is to be praised for doing it so assiduously.

The paradigm shift that has occurred is in balancing between the need to be popular so as not to be swamped and fade away into non-existence in a world where things go 'viral' and attention is given only to such things in a manner helter skelter or pell mell, and the need not to compromise one's artistic vision or soul.

To quote Tarkovsky again: "Art is a meta-language, with the help of which people try to communicate with one another; to impart information about themselves and assimilate the experience of others. Again, this has not to do with practical advantage but with realising the idea of love, the meaning of which is in sacrifice: the very antithesis of pragmatism. I simply cannot believe that an artist can ever work only for the sake of 'self-expression.' Self-expression is meaningless unless it meets with a response. For the sake of creating a spiritual bond with others it can only be an agonising process, one that involves no practical gain: ultimately it is an act of sacrifice. But surely it cannot be

worth the effort merely for the sake of hearing one's own echo?"

"Art is by nature aristocratic, and naturally selective in its effect on the audience. For even in its 'collective' manifestations, like theatre or cinema, its effect is bound up with the intimate emotions of each person who comes into contact with a work. The more the individual is traumatised and gripped by these emotions, the more significant a place will the work have in his experience.

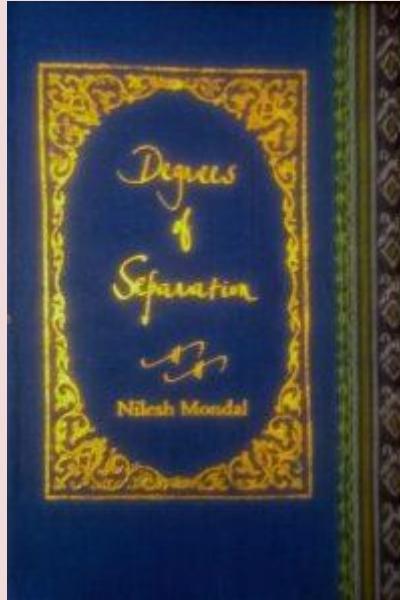
The aristocratic nature of art, however does not in any way absolve the artist of his responsibility to his public and even, if you like, more broadly, to people in general. On the contrary, because of his special awareness of his time and of the world in which he lives, the artist becomes the voice of those who cannot formulate or express their view of reality. In that sense the artist is indeed vox populi. That is why he is called to serve his own talent, which means serving his people."

I would like to go on but my aim is only to make people think, not prescribe or offer solutions or answers to my questions. They can find them by themselves though my views, Eliot's and Tarkovsky's may help jog their minds.

## **BOOK OF THE MONTH**

**Degrees Of Separation by Nilesh Mondal**

Published by Writers Workshop



### **LINKS**

<http://www.writersworkshopindia.com/books/degrees-of-separation/>

<http://www.amazon.in/Degrees-Separation-First-Nilesh-Mondal/dp/9350451557/>

### **About the Poet**

Born in 1993, Nilesh Mondal has lived most of his life in the small town of Asansol. An undergraduate in engineering by choice, he stumbled onto poetry by chance. His works have been published in various magazines and e-journals like

Bombay Literary Review, Café Dissensus, Muse India, Inklette, Kitaab, Coldnoon Travel Poetics, etc. He has been a part of many anthologies, published by Bee Books, Nivasini, Shabd Press, and many more. He was one of the winners of Juggernaut's Short Story Contest in 2016.

He currently works as a writer for Terribly Tiny Tales and Thought Catalog, as prose editor for Moledro Magazine, and is an intern at Inklette Magazine. His first book of poetry, Degrees of Separation (Writers Workshop), was released in June, 2017 and debuted at #2 of the Amazon Bestseller list of Poetry.

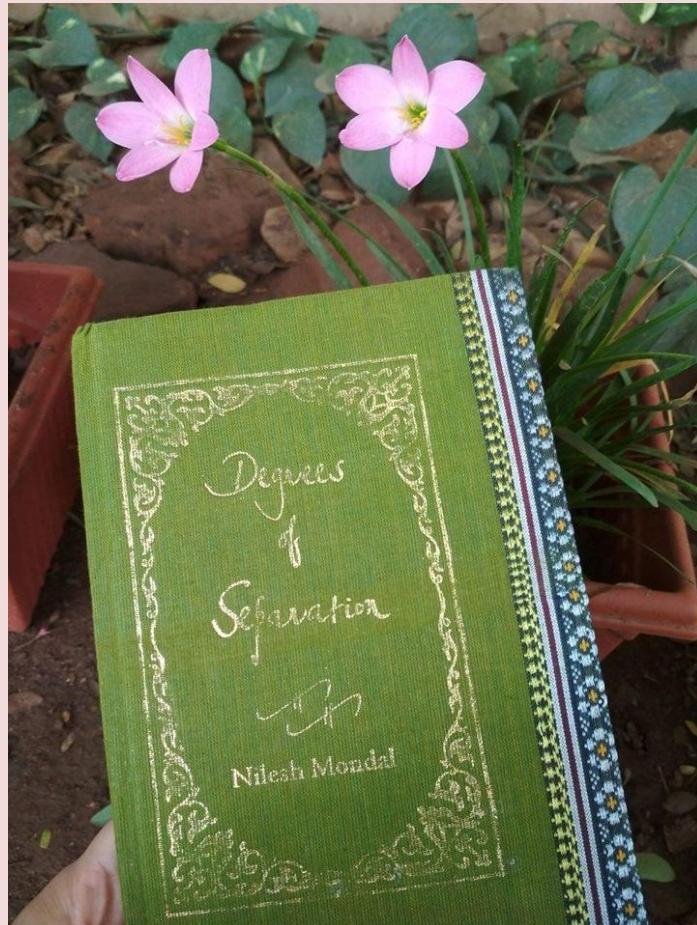
## **Reviews In Goodread**

### **Disha Narain Khemchandani**

The world needs some books, and 'Degrees of Separation' is one of them. For all those times when you manage to meander through the day or the nights when you ponder unrequited love, you need Nilesh's words to put situations in perspective. Some books are a song, easy on the ears and strong, just enough to find a place within the heart. His book, his craft, his stories, his love, his insecurities, his musings, his pictures...you'd be surprised at how your heart makes a pillow of his words for every moment when you've doubted yourself or let the world steal your thunder.

## Gursimran Kaur

Having read few of Nilesh Mondal's poem earlier, it leaves me wanting for more and you can never get enough with his work. The concept behind the articulation of book is unique all so well-crafted that you are actually reading a story weaved into a lyrical extravaganza.



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## A BEAUTIFUL PLAN...LET IT BE

*(A Poetic Tribute to #ChesterBennington #RIP)*

A word arrives,  
From an ocean of nothingness;  
Carrying thoughts endless.

Time is an agreement,  
The being gets a name to be;  
Acknowledged by everyone but not me.

In a beautiful plan,

Let it be.

The word disappears,

Into empty skies;

An incomplete thought sighs.

Time is a signature,

For vacant space comes back to be;

Visible to everyone but not Thee.

In a beautiful plan,

Let it be to be.



**Aakash Sagar Chouhan:** He is a he is a contributing Author, a blogger, a prose writer, a Poet, an article contributor, Group's Admin of many Pages and Communities residing in Rourkela. He co-authored the book "Between Moms & Sons" along with Geethanjali Dilip in 2016.



## MAYBE

Could this be something?

Could this be all there is?

When you pulled that scrawny twenty from your overcoat,  
could this be why Fortuna coughed you up outside Pimlico  
onto the corner of Park Heights & Northern Parkway?

I wonder.

Could this be unmitigated ashes falling over our children?

Could this be a joke, a hand-cranked joke with wooden  
gears

& roofing nails flexing their family trees against plywood  
intuition that dreams of solid oak all the way?

Maybe raising a boy of four to pick & shovel diamonds  
& fend off intruders with a Vietnam M-16 whose shoulder  
strap has seen better days isn't the answer.

Maybe diamonds aren't the answer.

Maybe empathy is a moth twitching its cocoon.

Maybe staccato brainwaves will replace traditional  
brainwaves

at the next alien summit.

Maybe we should address each other by first name only  
& acknowledge the pomposity that religions aren't unique  
but ancestrally distressed from one another.

Maybe.



**Allan Britt:** In August 2015, Alan Britt was invited by the Ecuadorian House of Culture Benjamín Carrión in Quito,

Ecuador as part of the first cultural exchange of poets between Ecuador and the United States. In 2013, he served as judge for the The Bitter Oleander Press Library of Poetry Book Award. His interview at The Library of Congress for The Poet and the Poem aired on Pacifica Radio, January 2013. He has published 15 books of poetry, his latest being Violin Smoke (Translated into Hungarian by Paul Sohar and published in Romania: 2015). He teaches English/Creative Writing at Towson University.



## MINIMAL

I believe in the portion that

dies underground but lives

like a dream only in the

waking hour.

For me it gave the great request,

gave the last ring for my finger.

I wear the seed but never

the bloom. I am the false train

at the station. My blood bleeds

its impurities and runs

like floodwaters over the city.

For now, at a standstill.

For now, half-whole -

a miniature of all I was supposed to be.

In this place I must accept

or die so much before my time.

In this place where wonder

is not enough, but is

itself a blessing.



**Allison Grayhurst:** She is a member of the League of Canadian Poets. Three times nominated for Sundress Publications “Best of the Net” 2015, she has over 1050 poems published in over 425 international journals. She has

sixteen published books of poetry, seven collections and nine chapbooks. She lives in Toronto with her family. She is a vegan. She also sculpts, working with clay;  
[www.allisongrayhurst.com](http://www.allisongrayhurst.com)



## **THE EYES MOIST WITH TEARS**

Thousands of queries had I  
To learn her answers, my soul used to cry  
Each query was made with all my heart  
For births had I cherished queries those  
But the answers only she knows

Little by little had I weaved them and lovingly  
Like birds make their nest with hay in the tree  
Generations after generations gone  
I got not her; still I nursed the hope  
I looked for her in my every abortive move

She finally unearthed her sacred face,  
The same as my heart had got the image!  
I got to realise my love was then pure and true  
I asked her my queries; she kept mum with fears  
But I found all answers in her eyes moist with tears.



**Aminool Islam:** A bilingual poet, he weaves poetry in both Bengali, his mother tongue, and English. He also weaves English sonnets. He did his M.A in English literature from National University, Bangladesh. He is currently the sub-editor of a literary magazine named Neeharika.



## **GWALIOR AGAIN**

This night is an asthmatic  
wheezing its way on long years  
of treads and pauses  
long streets of loneliness  
usurped by vacant eyes of another dawn  
Gwalior remains the same  
gripped by a hegemony  
of moments  
growing in wild abandon  
left unwillingly in an insanity and rust  
of a lonesome cannon  
only the shadows of the fort

holds another promise  
only your eyes  
behind a palace jali  
broke the defense  
of a monsoon  
song.



**Amitabh Mitra:** He is a Poet/Artist and a Medical Doctor at East London, East Cape, South Africa. He lives in many worlds and narrates his life in hallucinatory stopovers. Words and images tend to amalgamate in many such strange journeys.



## **KAVIPUTHRAN**

Son of a poet

You know

The cost of love

Having paid it

You have become priceless

You could go now

To the river

Yet you hesitate

End bereft

To the story

Of your love

Son of a poet

Don't you know

You cannot force

The ending?

None know it better

Than you

Son of man

Born

Poet

Today's Siddhartha

This is your story

Not hers unless she follows

Being your wife

Or hers who taught you the meaning  
Of love, the brown-skinned lover/one  
And of not being loved

When it ends

Go tell it

On the mountains

Let it echo in the blue air above  
Be reflected in the blue of the crystal waters

Of the river, at its beginning, there

At high noon

Where the sun casts no shadow

Or in the black night

Or when it is full of the moon and stars

And never look behind

Let them catch up with you if they love you

The famed two

For you alone are the eagle

In this, your story

Soaring, soon to be lost, in the feathers of the sky's clouds

To human sight.

Son, rise, fly, high, take wing

To where you can(not) be seen

Only/except by the keen eyes

Of love(rs) in flight.



**Ampat Koshy:** He teaches in a college as Assistant Professor in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. He is the author of books like Art of Poetry, Wrighteings: In Media Res, Figs, Allusions to Simplicity (poetry), and co-author of Wake Up India:

Essays for Our Times with Dr Bina Biswas and co-editor of The Significant Anthology with Reena Prasad and Michele Baron etc. He also runs The Signifcant League and has instituted the Reuel International Prize for Literature. He is a poet and critic and fiction writer of renown in India and abroad plus a Pushcart Prize Poetry Nominee of 2012. His Ph.D was on Samuel Beckett and his thesis was later published as Samuel Beckett's English Poetry: Transcending the Roots of Resistance in Language. He has also co-edited Inklinks and Umbilical Chords.



## NIGHT OF THE SEGA

*(Written with very limited knowledge on Sega. Please forgive for the inaccuracies, if any in the poem)*

I was walking on the beach  
at night, when the moon's  
floating in the sky and the  
sea below was dark, reflecting  
the silvery haze on its surface.

Afar on the beach I saw, a bonfire;  
and two women, beautiful and jolly,  
dancing to the Sega rhythms.  
Their colourful frills swirling

with the waves, wind, and the fire;

their hips undulating,

feet moving

to the beat of the drums

and of the other percussions;

eclectic deep voices

chorusing the bliss, pain,

suffering and glory

of the African slaves.

Dancers swaying to the beat,

moving around the bonfire;

their swirling flamboyant skirts

expressing the urge for freedom -

to fly away free

from the slavery;

their hearts and souls,  
away from the world,  
entranced to the Sega rhythms.

It was a night sublime –  
beyond words.

It was a night of abstractness.  
Of feelings.

It was a night  
of the Sega.



**Anand Gautam:** He hails from Hyderabad, India. He studied life sciences, currently works in a tech giant, and his heart and soul has always been inclined towards poetry and fiction. He snatches a few minutes every day from his life for his love of writing and believes that one's passion must be kept alive to be alive. He can be found on Instagram handle, @anand\_writes and he blogs at <https://notesandwords.wordpress.com/>



## **LIVING IN THE SHADOWS**

Evocative elegance

Expressing emotions

Illuminating the arrays

Of the human psyche.

Will you choose

the mirror of reality

defining the painful truth,

or will you hide

In the slippery shadows

Masking the framework

Of conditions you

Prefer to evade.

Lurking in the mind

Slippery shadows befall

Your conscious awareness

Diluting the rationale

And masking behaviours

The painful truth

Is that wishful thinking

Evades the true nature

Of real life issues.

When the mind chooses

To acknowledge reality

The tortured heart must feel

The heartrending emotions

Standing firm

To avoid emotional blackmail  
and crafting feelings of guilt  
in the interest of self.

A self-defeating cycle

Which sporadically  
Changes gear  
Whenever it chooses to.

Living in the shadows

Will expunge your happiness  
Rise up from the shadows  
Leave the ashes behind  
Breathe again  
Live Life!!



**Angela Chetty:** She is an avid poet and lyricist who lives in Durban, South Africa. Angela imbibes her work with a deep passion and belief that words can touch hearts and change lives. The depths of her soulful prose, cuts across different genres, talking to matters of the heart. Poetry is music for her soul; like oxygen, the breath of her life. In 2013, Heartfelt moments - A Treasure Trove was published [www.heartfelmomentspoetry.com](http://www.heartfelmomentspoetry.com)

Her poems have been selected for the Contemporary Poetry Digest, Evergreen Journal of Poetry, Contemporary Poetry Journal and has been featured in various special publications including Valentine's, New England Anthology, International Poetry Digest, From the Heart and 2017 Poetry Showcase and Yearbook. In 2016 and 2017, Angela was recognized as an Elite Poet.



## DISORDER

I feel the pulsating love of yours  
In the garden of my dream  
Like a bee busy in sucking honey  
In your love restless I do seem

You go on hating me as if I am  
A leper by the side of a road  
With eyes blazing with fire your  
Heart seems to be in angry mode

I have tried many a times to seduce  
You with gift of varied flowers  
Stolen from gardens of neighbors  
In night's superstitious hours

Your heart is made of stone picked  
From the mid of a rubble  
My wish to get you as the dear lover  
Vanished like a bubble



**Anil Kumar Panda (alias Tiku):** He is from Brajrajnagar, Odisha, India, and resides there currently. He works as a mine surveyor in coal mines. He writes short stories and poems whenever he gets time.



The room rains melancholia in thick peels of sludge.

I, drench, gasp for breath, drown...

I lie beneath the water and  
birth mushrooms of words,  
little buoys that drag me up to the surface,  
they soak in the sun.

And I, discount soil, floating husk,  
unwilling ark of the quotidian apocalypse,  
lie barnacle less,  
no weight, no ripples,  
underwater eyes staring at a gathering storm.



**Anish Vyavahare:** Writer, brand builder, quizzer, public speaker, event organiser, psychology, advertising and writing teacher - essentially if there is a job to be done, I do it. Or get you people for it. I have a long standing affair with eating, cooking and Wikipedia. I like to travel if there is someone from the land to show me around. So if you want to invite me to where you are, I am welcome. :) For the serious stuff, I teach UG and PG Mass Media students. I help businesses do smart marketing where they build a strong brand, make money and do some really cool stuff to engage with their audience. I have been running a Poetry open mic in Thane, called Poetry Tuesday, for the last 5 years (almost!). I teach basic creative writing to beginners. And I have recently launched a multi-lingual Youtube channel called The Poetry Affair of India where you are welcome to feature with your poetry! You can check us out here - [bit.ly/1LnZdUB](http://bit.ly/1LnZdUB)



Little gypsy

big bus station

all the things

she knows

Deep the ocean

micro plankton

still only

glows and glows



**Annika Lindok:** She is an English teacher and a freelance translator, living in Estonia. Her work has previously been published in Scryptic Magazine, Five 2 One, Peacock Journal, Quail Bell Magazine, Zoetic Press's Nonbinary Review and others, upcoming in Degenerate Literature and Ariel Chart. She is a prose editor for Escapism Literary Magazine.



## **RAINBOW MUSINGS**

Have you ever seen a chandelier,  
Coming off its hook and falling to its death?  
Crystals, breaking into a thousand rainbows..  
Fascinating - almost surreal - for spectators..  
Those seven colours are  
Seven emotions that come flashing  
Like how your life flashes  
In front of you  
...  
Live it  
And you know it's like living your seven deaths



**Anupama Soni:** She works is an advancement professional and works with IIT Bombay.A closet writer she comes from the family of writers. This is her first publishing feat!



## THE ATTACK OF THE TECH

All our lives,  
Are basically about likes,  
We want validation, Instant  
gratification,  
As technology goes berserk,  
All this data we gulp and burp,  
One day they say The Purple People  
will come.  
  
Till then we have time to think and run,  
From invisible powers that slash and burn,  
Our instinct and common sense at

every turn.

We have to stop this and stop this

now,

We need the answers and how!

Our phones lead us now by the Wi-Fi

leash,

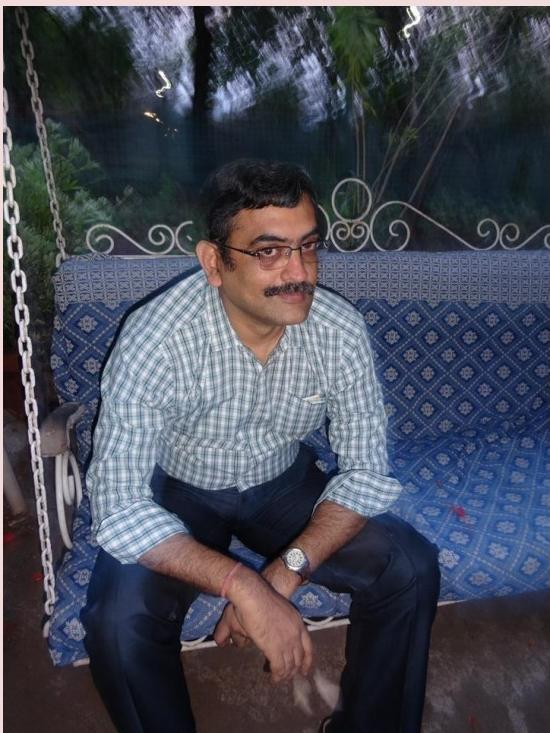
Our brains are slowly getting out of

reach.

If you find a solution, tell me about it

And no, don't whatsapp; let's see if

you can take a pen and write it!



**Anurag Mathur:** He is a trained bean counter, works for a financial services group and has spent almost two decades serving that industry. Whatever little time that has been spared from work or sleep or reflective meditation has – with quite a few well-meaning prods and nudges from friends – been devoted to occasionally tapping to the Muse's dictats from time to time.



*(Sunrise over Andaman Sea: pic by Asoke Kumar Mitra, taken from AIR ASIA Flight)*

## **LONGING.....**

All are silent now

Tattooed moon peeping through clouds,

Insane memory

Strange winds.....

Close your ravaged eyes

Forgotten innocent childhood

Uncertain hour of silence

Loneliness strangled in the wind.....

This night and every night

Memory into memory

Fireflies.....

The sunflower bathing in the moonlit night

The night falls gently

Wrapped in lotus leaves

Endless secret night rub shoulders with insane  
moon.....



**Asoke Kumar Mitra:** I am from India, Kolkata. Poetry is my passion.



## YEARNING

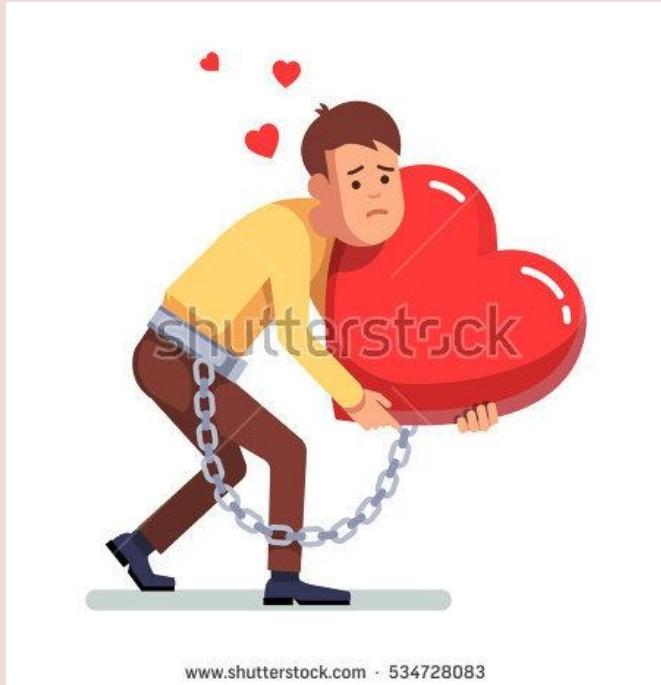
The dawn dew gliding from blue mist and husky trees,  
The vermillion in the west spreading its aura for the end,  
The tired dust of vagrant legs returning eagerly home  
Tell me murmuring of some other ages and countries.  
The solitary sundown shady wrapped in occasional flares,  
The morbid midnight hooting of melancholy owl surreal,  
Arouse things within me which I feign not to understand.  
The animated air taptaps on the torn pages of piled  
calendars.  
The grey days of childhood or even of the days earlier than  
those,

Beckon me with sigh and breathe yearning to go back infinite ever.

I lay in bed sweating with visions of white horse and a crowned king.



**Avik Kumar Maiti:** He is a poet and writer from Midnapore. He is a permanent ESL teacher at Belda Gangadhar Academy, West Bengal. He likes to travel, explore the locale with cultures, to drink life to the lees', passion in humanity and drenched in literature. He believes that God is there and one day everything will be fine again. He believes in the flame eternal that is within us, which may cause a miracle with just a sympathetic touch. Email: [itzakm@gmail.com](mailto:itzakm@gmail.com)



## SCAMSTRESS

I met her at a bar  
In a foreign place  
When I saw her eyes  
That lights up her face

I fell in love -  
Instantaneously  
She had us leave the bar  
Almost immediately

We had a one night stand

Then we separated

Back home I received an email

That said after we had mated

She had fallen pregnant

And needs financial assistance

Then I started sending money

Over long distance

I was so smitten

With this fabricated child

When I heard the news

I became like an animal in the wild

I sent her money fiercely

Because I wanted to care

For my daughter

I had out there

In this foreign country

I used to work and stay

Where I met this fraudster

This fateful day

When I later discovered

This child was just all lies

It was like losing a loved one

Bringing tears to my eyes

I felt betrayed

And wanted her charged

The amount of money she scammed

Was extremely large

I felt so stupid  
And wanted to scream  
At this romance scam  
That shattered my dream

Of meeting my daughter  
That was supposedly born  
It made me feel angry  
Disappointed and forlorn



**Bevan Bogganpoel:** He was born in Salt Lake, Port Elizabeth, South Africa. He attended Soutpan Primary and matriculated at Westville Secondary School. He completed

a Baccalaureate in Education at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. He launched his debut Anthology 1 December 2016. The book was well received by the public and he sold 200 copies locally. He is also an author at a South African website known as Litnet (Literature Network in South Africa). His poetry is written in a South African context that covers different issues in daily life. In his writings he strives to tell a story or teach a lesson that will inspire and motivate. He is currently a teacher at Bethelsdorp Road Primary in the northern areas of Port Elizabeth.



## **DISK OF LOVE**

.....and love is not a figure of

speech,

it is an overflowing river.

It is so close and turn too distant.

It is full of life but fragile,

so colourful but ready to die.

It is so bright but accompanied

by darkness.

It's tears are sometimes healing

when they say goodbye to love.

## No Love!

Love never say goodbye,  
sometimes it feels like forever,  
today it does not contain ever.

It's story lives within misery  
and happiness, like an ocean  
it roars.

It's stories are untold  
can't be told.

Love cannot be written,  
can be broken not healed.

.....and love is a dream for us all,  
worth us all, elevate us all.

On top of marriage courses  
beneath rest its particles.

.....and love is not blind

but those who utter of shape  
are blind, if only it can be heard  
like a distant song it,  
it can be known.

.....and love is not a crime,  
it is not a punishing whip,  
not a court case courtship.

It listens not to words,  
touched by its incremented  
delusions, we create songs.

There are no love songs but  
particles of joy and wonder.

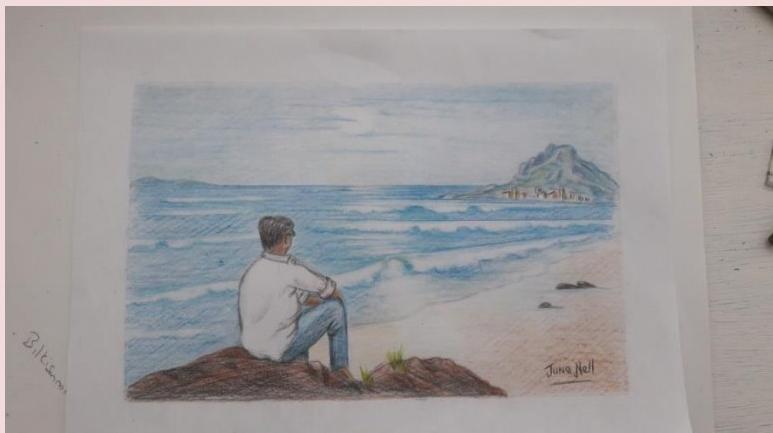
.....and love always stand alone.

.....and love can never be stolen,  
along rivers where it flows,  
all rocks are story mongers.

....and love will never be too young.



**Bheki BO. Nxumalo:** He honed his writing and performing skills at FUBA School Of dramatic And Visual Arts, where he did speech and drama. His earlier poetry was published in a book titled FEDILITIES V., edited by Kobus Moolman. He has performed in festivals such as Bosman Weekend Festival, Newcastle Winter Festival, Macufe festival, to name a few. He has graced broadcasting mediums like SABC, Y fm and Trans Africa radio blowing the poetry horn. He is a member of Amavukuvuku music band. He also facilitated children storytelling at Xarra Books.



## THE EBB AND FLOW OF LOVE

The ocean spreads before his gaze  
where he rests his eyes.

The sea serenades his fortunes  
calm and bountiful -  
swept by the sky's shade of blue,  
grey's brush of cloud and sunset's  
golden hue.

Twinkle, Twinkle little star  
beckons his memory -  
destiny's waves flow in tides

lit by moonlight's glow and  
sunshine's beam.

His feet rise to reality  
from the dream of his gaze -  
where he rests his eyes.

He will return -  
to the sea where his wish is  
kissed,  
calm and bountiful -  
to rest his eyes,  
his fortune is met in  
the ebb and flow of love.



**Bilkis Moola:** She is an Educator who resides in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province. Her first published anthology, “Wounds and Wings: A Lyrical Salve Through Metaphor” was received throughout South Africa and launched her poetic persona. It evolved as an introspective quest for recovery from her personal narrative of an abusive marriage. Her poetry is a delicate negotiation of patriotism and ethnicity. She navigates a pluralistic dialogue towards multiculturalism and transformational activism in post-apartheid South Africa as “A Sprightly Cultural Hybrid In Metamorphosis”. She presently divides her time between professional responsibilities and post-graduate studies in Education. Her pen continues to sketch the flotsam in her mind from the passion in her heart on shreds of paper that bloom into poems.



## **THE LAST COFFEE, TOGETHER**

Coffee is a wall-  
Steaming between you and I;  
We drink our own thoughts-  
In the hush of private hells.  
  
My nervous hunger devours-  
A pastry that has gone stale,  
Cream, chocolate, fungus and all,  
Swallowed in anxious chunks.

You offer a cigarette-  
Without lighting it;  
I turn to ashes-  
And disperse in vacant spaces-  
In the storm of your sigh.

What is there to tell by way of a farewell?  
Words.... Worn to the bone-  
Devitalized, bled out-  
Emptied to the marrow of meaninglessness.  
Silence, the indifferent knife shall tear us open,  
And we part without shedding a tear.  
You and I discover aliveness-  
In each other's numbness.

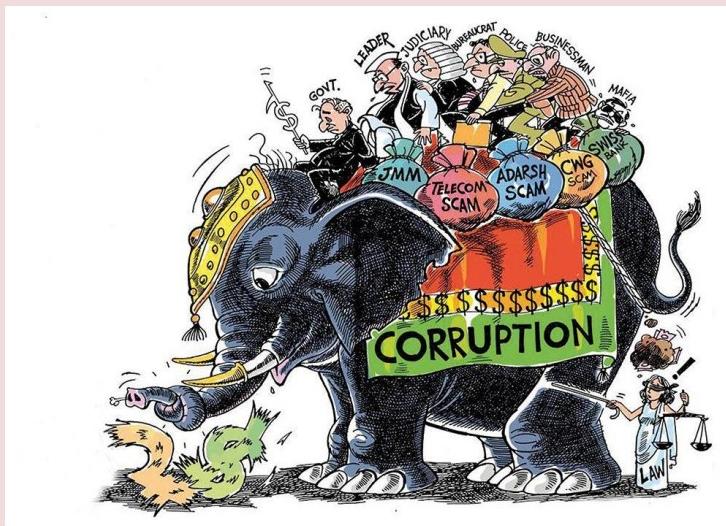
Parting is eventful, a dark comedy:  
Our pet cat gambols in the twilight-  
Trying to grab its shadow;

To our garden, a bird drops dead mid-flight-  
Before reaching its nest;  
Still we are bored to death;  
Let's not argue; leave the stained coffee cups-  
For the nocturnal rain to wash.

For the first time, I forgive your night blindness...  
It makes you trample the flower beds as you depart,  
Crushing every new shoot and bud.  
Once your back is turned-  
Our house crouches in wait to guzzle me....



**Bini B.S.:** She is currently an academic fellow and program officer at Balvant Parekh Centre for General Semantics and Other Human Sciences, Baroda, Gujarat. Her research articles, poems and translations have appeared in national and international Journals and anthologies. She is the editor of Anekaant: A Journal of Polysemic Thought. Her poems were part of an anthology of corporeal poems titled A Strange Place Other than Earlobes: Five Poets, Seventy Voices published by Sampark, Calcutta in 2014. She is the winner of the 2016 J. Talbot Winchell award presented by the Institute of General Semantics for her contributions to the discipline of general semantics, which she received in a ceremony in New York on October 21, 2016.



## MY COUNTRY

In my country  
this beautiful troubled land  
flag flaps gracefully  
land of plenty  
where people go hungry  
it is called fate  
yes for those in the skyscrapers  
in the tin shed  
the sky is the same  
justice is just a statue frozen  
for ages

innocents as undertrials  
rot behind bars  
with no hope  
let alone future  
from troubled Kashmir  
to the quiet Kanyakumari  
the disturbed east  
to the potholed west  
many languages, many tongues  
each divided within  
those who rule  
travel in splendid luxury  
at the cost of the ordinary  
who travel like cattle  
they come to people with folded hands  
plenty of new promises  
catch phrases, beautiful lines  
promise you heaven and in bonus the sky

you are back home with dreams and hopes  
hope becomes a mirage  
promises fly off  
misery continues  
in the Parliament  
they shout and out shout each other  
you bite your nails  
and see you lost your finger  
nothing happens  
they come back again  
with folded hands with new promises  
and hopes woven beautiful in words  
you fall for it in the name  
of religion  
and what not  
we make a fool of ourselves  
little realising  
for all this we alone

are responsible  
when will we wake up  
will we ever.



**Chandramohan Naidu:** He is a retired bank employee, now a freelance writer and photographer based in Chennai, part of the poetry circle which meets first Wednesday of every month. I am writing poems to be subsequently brought out into a collection.



## **THE SAME RIVER TWICE**

I have been in the same river twice,  
Though I am changed for sure,  
I have heard the roll of loaded dice,  
But still this stream is pure.

My toes tickle hard the gritty bed,  
I look about and hum,  
But there still drums the warning in my head,  
That pain will not be dumb.

No river may cross the same man twice,  
The flux of years consumes,

Now I am clamped within tight time's vice,  
Whatever hope presumes.



**Christopher Villiers:** I am freelance writer in the United Kingdom, with a Master's degree in Theology, who writes about God, Love and the Universe, big things in little poems! You can see more of my poetry on my Facebook page.



## **WITHERED**

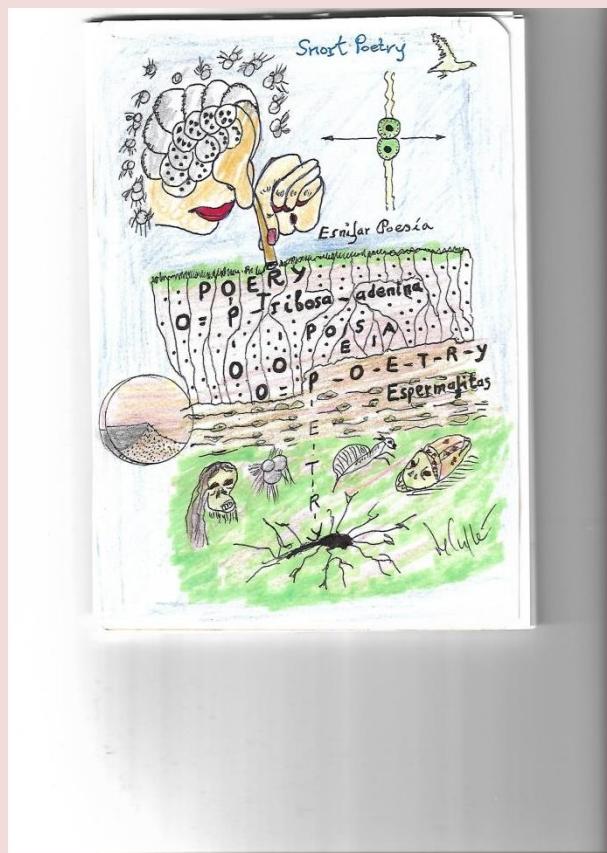
Your hollow, empty words  
reverberate all the broken promises,  
annihilate the last scintillation  
of an unfinished love.

My negligent, empty heart quenched  
all your subtle, amorous advances  
until my real essence  
was absorbed by yours.

What supposed to be  
a Supernova of euphoric vibrations  
metamorphosed into a  
withered, crumbled flower petal  
drained by your artful deception.



**Dagnne Aignend:** Dagnne Aignend is a pseudonym for the Dutch poetess and photographic artist Inge Wesdijk. She likes hard rock music and fantasy books, is a vegetarian and spends a lot of time with her animals. Dagnne posted some of her poems her fun project website [www.dagnne.com](http://www.dagnne.com). She's the co-editor of Degenerate Literature, a poetry, flash fiction, Arts E-zine. She has been published in several Poetry Review Magazines, in the anthology's 'Where Are You From?' and 'Dandelion in a Vase of Roses'.



## SNORTING POETRY

I know you're lying down

But you don't sleep, no.

I'm sitting at my study table

Snorting Poetry

In which Love tells me

That I got till your bed.

The sheets of your bed

Tell me that I got in

To sleep with you for a while

And enjoy your beauty.

But no, i can't

Since in my good or bad lyre

These poems I'm snorting

Smear ink and come out verses.

I raise my eyes

Staring these at our pic

When you and me

Walked kissing ourselves

By the Loveliness Road

And, approaching to Your home

Your parents threw a veil

So that you'll enter in house

And I was going to \*\*\* off.

That no, I don't want

See me between the sheets

Because in the soap-maker' bed

Who does not fall, slips up  
And that's why I'm snorting  
In yet.



**Daniel de Culla (1955):** He is a writer, poet, and photographer. He is also a member of the Spanish Writers Association, Earthly Writers International Caucus, Director of the Gallo Tricolor Review, and Robespierre Review. He's moving between North Hollywood, Madrid and Burgos, Spain.



## **AN EASY DEATH**

It's not pretty.

None of this

is pretty. It's

garish. It's

gaunt. It all

leaves a smell

that never leaves

the marrow

of those that find

the decomposing

chorus. They

always bulldoze

the houses

after they remove

the bodies.



**Darren C. Demaree:** He is the author of five poetry collections, most recently “The Nineteen Steps Between Us” (2016, After the Pause Press). He is the Managing Editor of the Best of the Net Anthology and Ovenbird Poetry. He is currently living in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and children.



## **DENNIS BRUTUS (PART 1) THE MAHATMA OF POETRY**

When we were helpless and violated,

When your very name was illegal and could not be published,

When your writing was banned,

When your thoughts were not allowed to be uttered,

When you were shot by the South African secret police,

When you were incarcerated with Mandela on Robben Island

When your bullet wound scar was kicked by the savage warder on Robben Island,

Your very survival still gave us hope,

Dear Dennis.

Your life helped give us life, dear Dennis.

Your wife, your children, your career, your life,

Were all in the clutches of a merciless, vile, vicious regime.

Still, you did not falter.

How could a sentient soul like you even exist,

We asked, if there was no God,

If we are not all, indeed, God's creations?

Blessed with a great intelligence,

Incisive perception,

Incredible vision,

Goaded by the overwhelming injustice in our native land,

You forsook yourself, your family, your life.

You volunteered everything that you are for South Africa,

For the service of humanity,

For the world.

Imperfect as we are, human as we are

Unethical as we can be

False as we can be

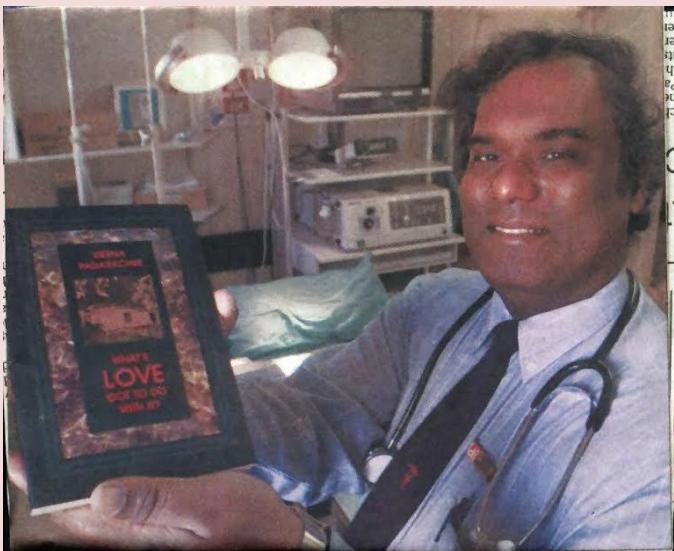
Dishonourable as we can be,

You still believed in us

You risked your skin for us

You are still a target because of your love

for the agonising people of our planet.



**Deena Padayachee:** He is a South African born medical doctor who is the winner of the Nadine Gordimer Prize for prose. Crux, Wasafiri, Skive, Glomag and the Indiana Voice Journal have all featured his work. He has delivered lectures on his writing at the universities of Copenhagen, Tuebingen and Louisiana. His book of short stories, What's love got to do with it? was awarded the Olive Schreiner prize. His prose features in the University of Cambridge's Writing from South Africa, the Reader's Digest's Best South African short stories and A century of South African short stories.



## **COLOURS**

One day

When a spirit is set free

I will carry the sun kissed dew

On strands of unkempt hair

And wave them in the skies

Watch the colours dissolve

Into the blue canvas

And cherish a rainbow

As my heart splits

Into colours

Colours

Of love

Of lust

Of desires

Of dreams

Fulfilled

Yet

Remaining



**Deepti Singh:** I am a Doctor in Community Medicine in State Government service and writing and music is my passion. I love to experiment and explore, and my favorites in this regard are nature and human behavior.



## A TERMED LOVE

What if one day I wake you up from your dream..  
A dream of our beautiful love  
And a dream of facade relation...  
And a dream of embracing flowers..  
And a dream where two hearts bloomed..  
And a dream where you wished to see us in moonlight..  
What if I walk past by you, whispering into your ears  
That I loved you  
but some roses are meant to bruise you..  
That some promises are meant to be broken..  
That some kohls are better in tears..  
That some hearts are prominent in trouble and crick..

And that there was a lie beneath every moment we were together..

What if one day we cross each other surprisingly..

Will you still seek a shelter in me..

Will you still miss me the way you used to..

Will you still clasp me as you did in the past..

Will you be the same soul at least trying not to hold me at guilt..

Or you will guilelessly act as we are strangers again..



**Devayani Deshmukh:** She is pursuing a master's degree in computer science in the USA. She is highly interested in writing.



## WHY?

Only a few words were spoken at the dawn,

And then there was silence,

The scourge of the unspoken verses,

Killed the cacophony of incertitude.

Only the eyes opened sometimes,

To reveal the deep pain and the hurt,

There were no tears,

Only a steeliness of resolve.

But then the river rose,

And the high tide took her to the sea,

The magnanimity of nature,

Washed away her pain.

The walkways to the forest,  
Upon which she traversed so often,  
Collecting forget-me-nots and the petals of rose mallow,  
Lied down in silence, their faces red in shame.  
  
But it was not long before a torrential rain,  
Washed away the last drop of blood,  
The agonies of the beautiful soul,  
And the shock of the violent fate.  
  
One more life was lost,  
One more dream was destroyed,  
One more story went into oblivion,  
To satisfy the satanic hunger and thirst.  
  
Why didn't the angels come?  
Why didn't the earth dissolve and the grovels move?  
Why there was no shame in the shadows,  
And the magic light in the northern sky?  
  
Why the hunger always found its prey,  
And the dreams had to die in pain?



**Dipankar Sarkar:** He is on a continuous journey to discover himself and the mystery called life. He remains an eternal optimist with a never-ending zeal, in spite of the many battles that he has lost and few that he has won.



## URBAN DIVA

*Love's Odyssey*-Are you looking at me or both of us? Be honest

with yourself, you are so sick and tired of trying to breathe in your

socially elected pigeon hole talking the same talk the same walk

what to do acting the fool who to falsely woo even mocking that

which is taboo but do you love yourself? Do you accept your place

on that dusty shelf? It's okay if you think we're strange or queer

seemingly challenging our human race, well what do you know?

It's obvious our shared tastes have brought us together in this

accusatory age as we play our parts on the sexual revolution

stage-Say what? You think my bold performance hinders her

perceived calmness, her liquid chocolate halo? Have you not

noticed we share the same head dress, our proud multicolored

fashion sense? Step out be brave relax allow us to show how

our colors flow-Forget Picasso who claimed color weakens the

soul in his monochromatic existence his artistic persistence.

*Inscrutable*-Am I really that hard to read? Don't be fooled by

my proud amber stare it's just my anatomy my cultural heritage

my genetic matrix-You seem to frown at my crazy colored neon

muesli crown, honestly you seriously need to let your hair down-

I am the raven in the night seeking specks of popping light marking

my new sexual mission freedom fight-Hold your reaction I'm

merely protecting us from misinformed misconstrued misunderstood

friction-Please cancel your parrot bible lesson. We own the night-

Masters of our own confessions in various elected sessions and you?

*Backstreet Catwalk* -We don't claim to be the best raconteurs we just

love being us, our tale is meant to heal create a new exciting appeal-

don't be a sissy dare to be sassy honor Versace heck you  
might even

feel sexy! Go neon crazy innocent like a sun kissed daisy  
maybe wear

Prada and worry nada a brush of Gucci a stroke of Saatchi  
calm your

polkadot mood be fierce own it feel it - For we are urban  
diva...



**Don Beukes:** He is the author of 'The Salamander Chronicles', his debut poetry collection published by Creative Talents Unleashed. Originally from Cape Town South Africa, he is a retired teacher of English and Geography and taught in both South Africa and the UK. His poetry deals with issues affecting the global village and he

is passionate about speaking out against racism, homophobia, sexism and intolerance. He has collaborated with artists from South Africa, the UK and America as part of his Ekphrastic poetry collection and his poems have been anthologized in various publications. His poetry has also been translated into Afrikaans, Farsi and Albanian.

His debut collection is available here

<http://www.ctupublishinggroup.com/don-beukes-.html>

**Vakseen (artist):** While working on hit records in the music industry has played a driving force in his career, it's Vakseen's (born Otha Davis III) passion for the arts that has served as his key to sanity in the fast paced entertainment business. The self-taught Floridian has developed a distinct collage-influenced painting style (Vanity Pop) that fuses elements of cubism, photorealism, fashion design and pop surrealism into vibrantly alluring, abstract portraits. While most viewers assume they're viewing collage or mixed media art, each creation is in fact meticulously hand painted directly on canvas. Drawing distinct inspiration from our fascination with popular culture, his gallant paintings are a celebration of women, beauty, duality, insecurity and self-preservation. Currently based in Los Angeles, his paintings have been featured by Adidas,

Complex, Juxtapoz, Hi Fructose, Vibe, Bombay Sapphire Gin, and Tupac Shakur's estate, amongst others. In addition to being sold to collectors and art enthusiasts, his art has been shown in countless gallery exhibitions and featured in over 100 magazines worldwide. To view #Vakseenart visit [VakseenArt.com](http://VakseenArt.com)



## INVASION

*(The setting is during the slave trade era between Africans and the Europeans)*

The breeze blew, slowly.

Gazing at the sun, lonely.

Enjoying the sweet melody of the bird.

And wish the day never end.

\*\*\*\*\*

Suddenly, my blood ripples.

Here they are,

With switchblades and guns.

Here they are,

Everly prepared, like a sabre toothed tiger.

Ready to devour his prey.

\*\*\*\*\*

Our women.

Our children.

Our harvest.

All they take,

to Alphalae.

\*\*\*\*\*

The sweet melody of the bird,

all turns to wail.

The grizzled ones,

all snatch their guts.

From the bayonet of tribulations.

\*\*\*\*\*

Here am I,

crying.

Here am I,

praying.

And waiting anxiously for the day to end.



**Evince Uhurebor:** My pen name is Evince Brian. I am a poet, writer and the Editor of [kitloaded.wordpress.com](http://kitloaded.wordpress.com).



### **1 2 3 PULL**

Rub together sticky notes and

Put the green side down, she read.

Stroke in the direction of the growth

Grab the flap and pull at its head.

Close your eyes, don't brace yourself

This won't hurt a bit, she said

Don't give it a thought, just keep it taut,

Now's your time to shed.

Legs of satin, hands of sheen

All that lies ahead.

Rugs and carpets belong on the floor

Now let's just start to shred.

I'd like to keep it real, I pled

Just real as can be, in bed

Why bother with a honeymoon, she said

Just stay at home instead?

Shiny soft arms and legs

Just like when you wed,

Cold wax and oil do you a solid

If you'd like to get some head.



**Gayatri Sekar:** She likes words and all the things they can do. Favorite quote: "All these signs lead to science"



Yes, a mirage, indeed,  
moving on desert dreams,  
on unsettled sands, now here, now there,  
with longings that remain  
as desires unquenched,  
a mystery unresolved, unrevealed,  
vanishing quietly, before your eyes,  
an unanswered question, immortal.

An invisible shadow  
that swallows, revolves, slowly,  
around the same pole,  
and stops, when least expected,

a caller in disguise, a stranger,  
refusing identity, a master,  
a permanent visitor,  
at improper hours, uninvited,  
calmly settled in your living room,  
unnoticed, an actor ready for drama.



**Geeta Varma:** She has been a teacher for thirty years and a Freelance journalist. She is now an Educational Consultant and writes for Deccan Herald. She enjoys working with children and has conducted many creative workshops. Her interests include music, reading, writing (poems and stories for children) and travelling. She is married to Shreekumar Varma (Writer and Novelist) and has two sons, Vinayak and Karthik and a daughter-in-law daughter Yamini. She lives in Neelankarai, Chennai.



## ASTEROID

If I am a silhouette sculpted in the light,  
I am a field of energy, a hill of cognition in sight,  
A fragment of a potency brimming with a gentle might,  
A hazy shadow of soft rays of a moonlit night.

If I'm a wisp drifting with winds in verdant foliage,  
I carry the fragrance of all that is created before my age,

With the promise and hope of perfume of a new dawn,  
In shafts of light caressing with gold dust, Earth to adorn.

If I am a song floating with the aspen breeze,  
Tremulous with musical waves flitting among trees,  
Then my being sings tunes of love in a universal vibration,  
With all that resounds in a beautiful surrender to creation.

If I'm just this form, person, identity palpable and credible,  
Then I'm just a template of all such souls in this  
masquerade incredible,  
For here I am playing my role in a script crafted,  
Lines that etch themselves in a time frame of a miracle  
created.

Beating with the metronome of a clock preset,  
Ticking endlessly in frames of latitudes, longitudes of a  
cosmic net,

Till I melt into the dark skies of nothingness in the void,  
Light dust of brilliance in galaxies of a weightless asteroid.



**Geethanjali Dilip:** A Chennaiite at heart, she is a graduate from Ethiraj College and a postgraduate in French from Bangalore University. She is passionate about poetry, travel, teaching travel, gardening, interior decoration, and enjoying a deep spiritual connection with everything. She's been teaching French, freelance, in Salem for the past 34 years in schools and colleges, and at her centre, Zone Francophone, in Salem.



## 76 SUNSET STRIP

He lives in a house

He doesn't lock

Seventy-six

Palm Road

The Rock

Crowds the tiny cove

Chasing the blue

Sky

To the dunes

Of Africa

A se'night's sail

Of drugs

In felucahs

The lady of Lahore

Waits

In a door

As the shadows

Crowd

Casement Square

And dusk falls

Silently

On the drunken sailor

A Phoenician

Hami Balls

His name

Max whines Me-me

Waiting for his girl

To come

Venga, venga

(Ganga, Ganga)

And the Ganges rolls

To the sea

In full flow

In Bangladesh



**Geoffrey Jackson:** He has been an intrepid TESOL instructor at 5 universities and 4 colleges, blown off course from England to Holland, Finland, Hungary, Oman, Saudi Arabia and, in the Roaring Forties, to Denmark. A self-described European cosmopolitan and Americanophile with New World dreams, Geoff is the Poetry Editor for Fullosia Press.



## DEJA VU

the cars sped,  
traffic policeman  
screams, screeches and halts  
the ragamuffin pesters me to buy some flowers  
my mother tugs at my arm  
come on! let's get going!  
the street lights have come on  
I hear the guffaw of chai drinking men  
recalling a joke at the expense of an absent colleague  
my strange sense of deja vu prevails  
have I been here before?

the same place, same people  
and suddenly I turn in your direction  
looking up to where you stand  
devouring me with your eyes.



**Glory Sasikala:** She is a poet and writer, currently residing in Chennai. She is the editor and publisher of GloMag.



## **LOVERS IN THE NIGHT**

a promise

she will come to me

when the day sheds its light

and the night gives birth

to the new moon

I hear her dancing steps

in rhythm with the heart beats

of the night

I wait for her

a thief in the shadows

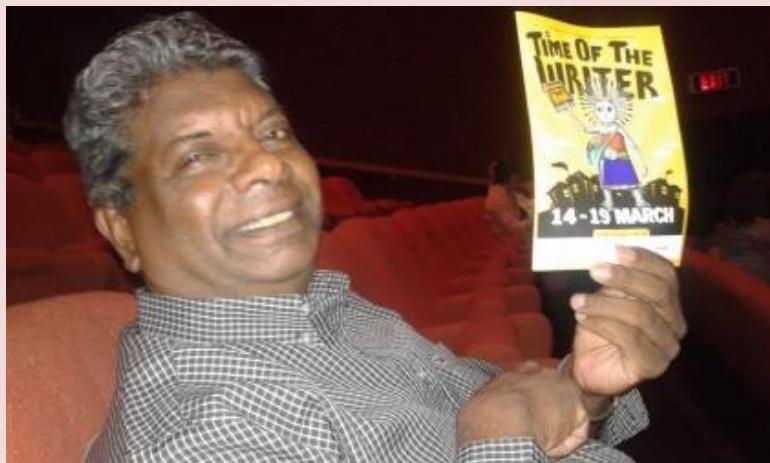
of the fugitive night  
my solitary heart  
beats, beats  
in a fitful frenzy  
like the waves  
thrashing wildly in a stormy sea  
restless, rising, falling  
pounding the shores

she steals into the night  
a silent apparition  
appearing as if from nowhere  
she startles me, intercepts  
my deep spellbound fantasies

the solitude of waiting  
smoulders in chaos  
frenzied desires

ignites into madness  
clandestine love  
fuels the passions  
the night conspires  
custodian of our secrets  
giving sanctuary to wayward lovers

she and I  
one body, one soul  
lying spent lost in nirvana  
deeper than the radiance  
of the moonlight  
the heart of the night  
pulsates with intrigue  
a haven, a refuge  
to lovers adrift in stolen pleasures



**Gonapragasen Naicker Aka Danny:** He is an Indian born, and brought up in South Africa. He has been fascinated by, and writing poetry since his early boyhood. He has performed his poetry at various forums, including the Poetry Africa Festival, the Mauritian Writers' Association, and Glorioustimes, India. He is the Convenor of the Live Poets Society, Durban, South Africa.



## (FOR M.)

This happens in parts - one, a year away and this, still happening.

Baby steps. Today was a good day. I knelt in the garden and kissed

A lily. This happened and i know it only because it did.

A year away, someone measures sun and shadow

On my palms, and i know it just is,

No matter who i am. This year, i was

More than my living. The blue i pointed out was not yours

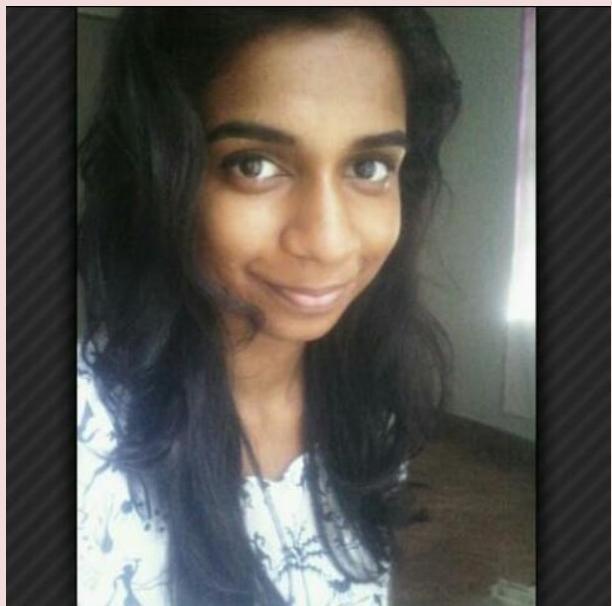
And you knew it. I'm sorry.

The doors keep opening

And we wear all the keys. Where do we stop?

I'm painting you my fear. Listen to the wind chimes

The sky cannot be named - the only  
Thing to do is love. I knew a little girl who kept  
Old cocoons in matchboxes, a sort of ritual,  
A check on living. Now, your fingers are made  
Of a different kind of hope. Ask me to move away.  
The body i kept and abandoned, breathes and walks  
On wet footpaths, watching the little cars. A night  
Is lit and waiting somewhere inside.  
It tells me in your voice that i belong elsewhere.  
This language is a droll thing to believe in,  
When you know the quiet is what keeps us  
Intact. A year away, I'm still safe.  
Show me the rain and the trees,  
Pick me dry leaves and tell me there's a song.  
Sing. Everything's coming alive.



**Gowri Suresh:** She is a first year literature student from Kerala.



## MEMOIR OF ANOTHER WORLD

“Remember this?” I inquire, holding up the indistinct plaything,

a dog, maybe. “You used to take this around with you everywhere,

you always had it.” I don’t know why I say it. I think it’s a test.

I observe the blank gaze change to recognition as she takes the toy,

turns it over and over in her small, pudgy hands before smiling brightly

and nodding, “I remember this.”

It's an awful game, this dishonesty, because I know for a fact she doesn't

remember this toy, this toy probably isn't even hers, I may have found

some other child's toy in the back yard and just thought it was hers. I know

I don't remember this toy, this fuzzy, dirt-covered dog-thing, can barely

remember when she was small enough to appreciate something like this myself.

She is consciously trying to amuse me, patronizing me, embellishing

on the pretend memories—"I called this dog 'Scruffy,' and we were best friends.

Scruffy thought I was his mother, and he was right." She looks at me, waiting

for my own ridiculous additions to the story, something about how I'm

this dog's grandmother, and how I've missed this dog so much since it went off live in the back yard, under the deck, and how I'm so glad that Scruffy's found his way home back to us again.

We take Scruffy inside and wash the dirt from the toy, dry its mangy, matted coat

with a blow-dryer, and in my head, I'm terrified at how quickly

she's adopted the idea that this toy was a defining part of her childhood.

I spend the rest of the day imagining strangers on the street stopping by her

where she sits in the front yard, doodling her adventures with Scruffy on the sidewalk

in fluorescent swaths of chalk, saying, "Do you remember me? I used to be

your mommy, daddy, big brother, remember?" I imagine her nodding, smiling,

taking the proffered hand of the friendly stranger

put out to lead her away.



**Holly Day:** She has taught writing classes at the Loft Literary Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, since 2000. Her poetry has recently appeared in Tampa Review, SLAB, and Gargoyle, while her newest nonfiction book, Tattoos FAQ, is coming out from Backbeat Books at the end of 2017.



## **THEATRE AND STAGE**

(Expressions to express

Accent to articulation

And, life to savour!)

Collection of feelings,

On a square stage,

Connection with the audience,

And, thus an appreciation!

Makes him to savour,

Each character at each moment,

To the fullest, whether he,

being a stone or a star,

Recognition embossed in the characters,

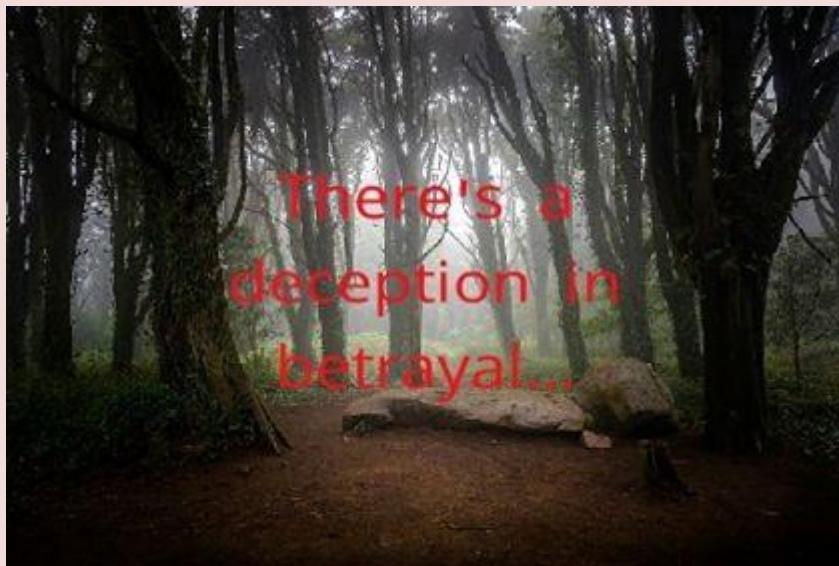
The personality personifies,

And, the love multiplies!  
Expressions and situations speak,  
Satisfaction comes from the applause,  
Rather than keeping any materialistic sauce,  
Amaranthine learnings and struggles,  
And, a look to experience the brook,  
The things seem, and complete,  
The whole drama - drama of artist!!



**Jayant Singhal:** A voracious reader and an enraptured author, Jayant Singhal, under the animated pseudonym of 'Saaransh'. He began nurturing the passion for expressing the enchanted aura of the world through his pen just a few

months ago. Having a strong affinity for English language, he loves to feel the imbuing effect of it. He is currently writing a Facebook page, "Aroma - The Essence of Life". Dazzling through the twists and turns of this beautiful voyage, commonly known as 'Life', he is en route to the bewitching nature of happiness and peace.



## **DECEPTION IN BETRAYAL**

I've fell victim to Deceitfulness

Most of my life

A double dealing Insincerity

Dirt kicked in my eyes

Juggling emotions

Falling away

Tired of the fast one

I've already Paid

There's deception In betrayal

An evasion of truth

A withdraw from reality

A constant abuse

There's a deception in betrayal

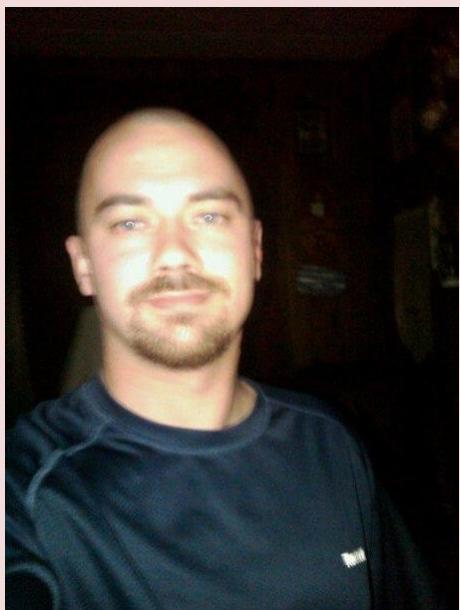
Let me introduce

My Vulnerability

A presentation of my pain

My susceptiveness

To the Treacherous rain



**Jeffrey Oliver:** I am a poet/lyricist, currently living in upstate New York. I have been writing for 20 years, I write my heart, soul and emotions and will never give up on this

crazy dream of mine. I have been told, that I have a captivating style when my work is registered in the minds of many. I am also a family man, I have a wonderful wife, who is my inspiration, as well as 7 beautiful children. Welcome to my mind.



## WISTERIA

Mysterious purple white wisteria  
vines of flowery grapes gemmate  
on branches wrapping tree trunks  
wisteria enormous moonblooms delirious.

Wild mild wisteria wondrous  
aromas falling idly from ferns  
winding wandering through winds.

Wisteria purple white mysterious  
lisping whispering softly luminous

as raindrops sparkle upon blossoms  
enormous wisteria starlights delirious.



**Joan McNerney:** Her poetry has been included in numerous literary magazines such as Seven Circle Press, Dinner with the Muse, Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze, Blueline, and Halcyon Days. Three Bright Hills Press Anthologies, several Poppy Road Review Journals, and numerous Kind of A Hurricane Press Publications has accepted her work. Her latest title is Having Lunch with the Sky and she has four e-books. She has been nominated three times for Best of the Net.



## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY**

I love you dearly

Following terms and conditions apply

Our marriage will be in five star hotel only

Terms and conditions apply

You will prepare food the Malayali way

Terms and conditions apply

Sambar must have ten ingredients

Terms and conditions apply

Vegetables must be sliced small

Terms and conditions apply

The broth must be thick

Terms and conditions apply

The rice must be boiled brown rice

Terms and conditions apply

It must not be too sticky

Terms and conditions apply

Thorans must not be repeated every day

Terms and conditions apply

Mezhukkuvaraty must be made in coconut oil

Terms and conditions apply

Idlis must be soft and fluffy

Terms and conditions apply

Vadas must be crisp and crunchy

Terms and conditions apply

If you are agreeable dear please sign this prenuptial  
agreement

Hereinafter, wife-to-be my terms and conditions apply.



**Late John P. Matthew:** Writer, poet, singer-songwriter, and blogger John P Matthew was born in the state of Kerala, India. His first success as a writer was Penguin's world-wide short story contest "India Smiles" in which his short story "Flirting in Short Messages" was selected for publication in an anthology. His poem "Call of the Cuckoo" has been published by Poetry Rivals. He was working on his first novel and writing a book-length travelogue about his native state of Kerala. He died in 2017.



## PART II

*(This serialized poem is about American Murder. It is a generality that came up by watching Cops: Reloaded reruns and my worser sense of acuity from experiences in the long, difficult hours of Night Life)*

Some restless wind has finally  
torn through the main avenue, your ears  
numbed, eyes and thoughts pulling  
recollections in and out of bags, one by one or  
as one

the restaurant plates and the eating patronage  
never quit out of the commotion acting as an engineering  
of motion, a law, or constant for substitute.

The server at the long table seems gainly and she keeps on redirecting

the food order with her hips back and forth on the ball of her heel.

She looks child-worn, transmuting eggs and toast into new shoes

diapers, maybe vacation money; to the beaches in northern Michigan.

The whole eastern side of the diner is glass window, tinted, starting

from the table up to the mien visible only to the incoming patrons

and sleepy highway sputtering out cars every few hours.

I look at you and realize our dead weight signifies

the end of the meal, both in satisfied tired return

of gaze and in the afternoon spooling in hot and

in volumes. We are comfortably close, in the air

conditioning remembering the audience we held last night



**Joseph Elenbaas:** I am a Christian writer, living in West Michigan.



## THE WAGON 1921

A year and a half after Jallianwala Bagh

My train leaves Tanur for Podanur

I'm a mappila peasant

Arrested for rebellion

Rebellion against the British

Rebellion against the gentry

We are 101 prisoners

Packed like cattle in a goods wagon

A wagon without windows

As airtight as it can get

It's so dark I see only red

The red of rebellion

The red of exasperation

I'm so numb I can feel only flesh

The flesh crushed in torture

So suffocating I breathe only life

Whatever life left in me

So thirsty I drink my sweat

Licking my dried sweat

Some of us drink our urine

Now I can breathe only memories

The memories of our struggle

Our violent struggle

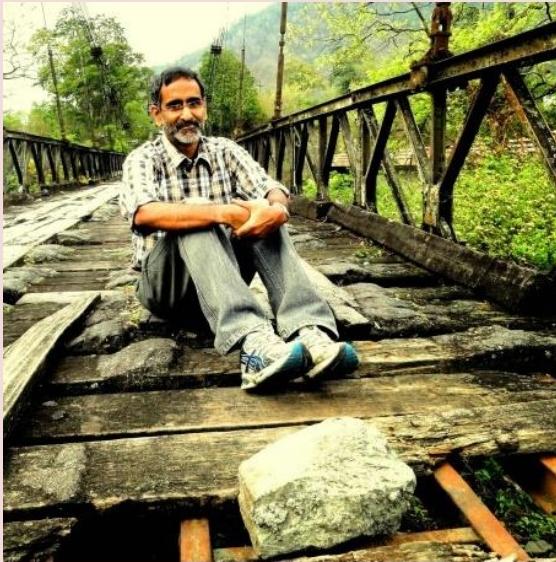
Our killing, our cruel revenge

I smell death in my hunger

I hear the last gasps of life

I hear the silence of death  
Now I feel nothing  
Except the music of the train  
The rhythm of its wheels  
An occasional whistle  
Sounding like a victory bugle  
Trumpeting our defeat  
Our death  
The death of our struggle

I feel nothing, hear nothing  
I open my eyes on a dusty platform  
Lying in a heap of dead bodies  
Seventy stinking corpses  
I wait to be taken away  
Tired defeated and lifeless  
To serve my life term in jail



**Kerala Varma:** He hails from Chirakkal (Kannur), Kerala, is a former Deputy General Manager of State Bank of India and lives in Chennai with his wife Chitra. He is an amateur writer, who believes in “simple living, simple thinking”, welcoming enrichers of life like love, humour, long walk, the river, sea, mountain, books, music and Internet and avoiding complicators of life like greed, anger, ambition, sentimentalism, sexism, god, rituals, religion and superstitions.



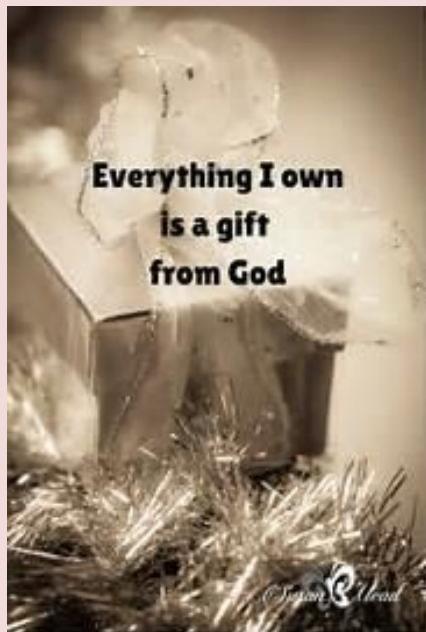
## **HEARTBREAK BEARS HOPE**

I heard it first when I saw him leave  
My heart overwhelmed with grief.  
Oh, I can tell you it makes no noise  
For when the heart breaks it steals your voice.  
  
I wake up every morning  
With its sound ringing like a bell  
But it goes unheard by the others  
Ah, this heartbreak doesn't let me tell.  
  
Now I have no control over the tears  
They simply roll down my face

With our memories of “cheers”  
The heartbreak begins to brace.  
I consume all emotions  
And simply draw a smile  
But yet the sound won’t leave  
I live in myself yet in exile.  
The sound is deafening and the pieces a million  
They lie like an art form lovely and brilliant.  
I pick up each piece and calm the sound  
One piece at a time until myself again I found.  
No one can tell the sound of a heartbreak  
Nor hope comes easily to those who forsake  
But a heartbreak bears goodwill  
As it brings hope and never lets life be still.



**Kiran Zehra Komail:** Put her in the mountains and she will bargain rhymes and rhythm from the tallest tree and the sward. Place her in the concrete jungle and she will sing you a song of love midst the streets and the walls. Show her a burning torch and she would tell you hope is approaching! Call Ms Kiran Zehra Komail a whirlwind of ideas or a foodie her zest for life is endless and so are her dreams! She could redefine the shades of red, yellow, black or white in words so vivid you'd almost wonder if the true shade of it was this. She works for Rotary News as the Sub Editor of the English and Hindi magazine. Travel, gourmet and people to her are intriguing. Her poems and sketches are her theorem – simple yet deep and humble.



## **MY GIFT**

God gave me wisdom

To write

I do this

During the day and even at night

It's when the Holy Spirit speaks

And I immediately connect

He fills me up

So out of obedience I act

I do it sober, drunk

And at times while I cry  
In every poem  
I lift the Name of Jesus high

Drunk of the Holy Spirit  
Not of alcohol  
So I'll speak about my Savior everywhere  
Like in the streets, hospitals even a shopping mall

Oh Lord! I thank you  
For this gift of writing  
And the joy You put within me  
When I'm reciting

My poetry  
Here and there  
By God's will  
I'll soon do it everywhere



**Leroy Ralph Abrahams (1976):** He lives in South Africa, Port Elizabeth, Helenvale, with his wife and two sons and a daughter. He is currently working for the church, Victory Ministries International and also volunteers at times. Leroy loves to write, love people and children and God's Word. He enjoys hospital visits because there he prays for the sick and encourages them. Leroy's poems are true and full of emotion that leaves the reader in a good mood. Most of his poems are autobiographical and serve as a warning to the young and Christians who are facing tough times. Verse en Inspirasie is his first anthology and he promises that it's not his last.



## WOODS

There are hidden souls

Secreted in the woods,

Chamberlains captured within the bark,

Not for imprisonment

Although they cannot escape,

They are inside for protection,

For their lot is to recall

The true memories of men.

When they wish to remember,

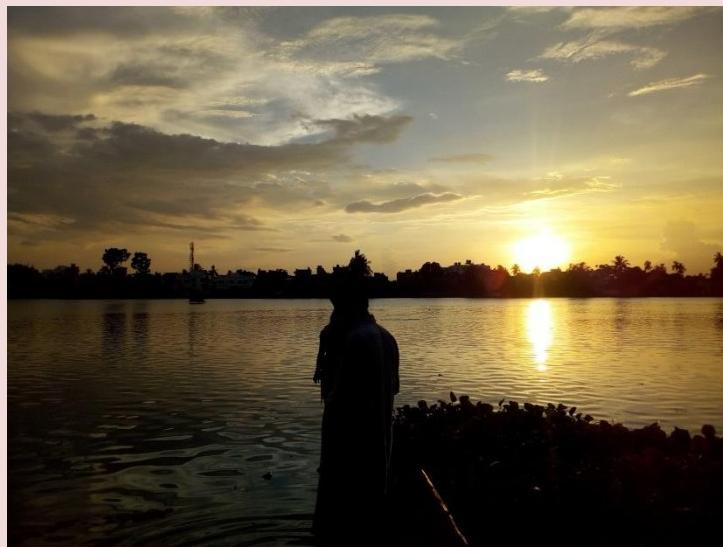
They call for the sky to bring Brother Sun,

The orb of remembrance,

And leaves blossom and spring forth  
And they pull messages of men,  
Reflected from the sky unto themselves,  
And they recall within the scope of the wood  
Those things worth remembering.  
  
And when they tire  
And choose to forget,  
The leaves drop away with the memories  
And fade in color and detail,  
And they sleep  
Under Sister Moon, the sphere of forgetfulness  
Until the world turns yet once more.



**Linda Imbler:** She is the author of the published poetry collection “Big Questions, Little Sleep.” She has also been published by [deadsnakes.blogspot.com](http://deadsnakes.blogspot.com), [behappyzone.com](http://behappyzone.com), [bluepepper.blogspot.com](http://bluepepper.blogspot.com), [buckoffmag.com](http://buckoffmag.com), Fine Flu Journal, Bunbury Magazine, Blognostics, Nailpolish Stories, Broad River Review Literary Magazine, Mad Swirl, Ascent Aspirations: Friday’s Poems, Unbroken Journal, The Voices Project and GloMag. Other poems are forthcoming in Leaves of Ink, Halcyon Days, Zingara and The Beautiful Space. Online, she can be found at [lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com](http://lindaspotryblog.blogspot.com). This writer, yoga practitioner, and classical guitar player resides in Wichita, Kansas.



## EVENING

Waiting for a long

This lonely room

Though there are some

well designed wooden furnitures

Though there are some

Memory old pictures

It's a lonely room

Both we are waiting for a long

Me and this room

After a lengthy slothful midday noon

The time arrived named 'Evening'

It's coloured, it's amazing

Moments crossing over

The border line dusk

It's end of the day

Named 'Evening' coloured.



**Lipika Ghosh:** Contemporary poet and short story writer of Bengali literature. Active period from 1995 to present. Written five books, collections of Bengali poems named 'Ekhon ja likhchhi' (2008), 'Aro kichhukhon' (2009), 'Silent mode' (2010), 'Meherban' (2011), 'Turning point' (2014). Supporting humanity, supporting to save greenery.



## SHRAADDHA

*(Shraaddha is a ritual performed by Hindus for their departed family members. In Bengalis even the daughters perform one for their departed parents on the fourth day)*

I was relieved of my duties and responsibilities towards  
you,

Really! As your daughter was that all I owed to you?

A little water, some milk and a few seeds of black sesame  
Trickling down the small palm of me,  
A few other things and the priest chanting,  
All succour to you granted.

Did you get any?

Some of the things offered of the many,

Did the water quench your thirst?

Or did the sesame get stuck causing a pain worse!

I felt so small and deceitful,

Performing the shraaddha, downright evil.

Maa! I wanted to cry out to you,

There was no one who would listen to,

To this crazy girl of yours,

Her face flooded with her own tears,

So full of disgust towards such illogic,

Trying to turn to something magical, my hours tragic.

A few smiles, streams of tears,

Through which I could see you clear,

Everything was there,

Everyone there,

Only that for you there was no glass of water,

Nor you Maa, to eat, nor drink, neither to come back to us ever.



**Madhumita Bhattacharjee Nayyar:** She is a Masters in English, is a bilingual writer (writing both in Hindi and English), writing by the name of Madhumita. A poetess, blogger, life skills counsellor, healer, She is also a social commentator and works with women and children. She started her career with the media, moving on to the perfumes and cosmetics sector and finally where her heart lay 'writing'. Her works have been published in various national and international magazines, newspapers, web magazines, ezines, journals, anthologies. The author of "THE NIGHT JASMINE AND OTHER LOVE POEMS", is also the winner of ICON OF THE YEAR-LIFESKILLS COUNSELLOR 2015-2016, CREATIVE WRITER OF THE YEAR 2016 and Indian Women Achievers Award 2016 for Creative Writing. She is an avid animal lover too, her motto in life being "Live & Love Life".



## **LOVE OUTSIDE HOME**

Why do we look for love outside our homes?

Because we need extra hands

To share the labour of dusting

The skeletons of our past off our shoulders.

To share the labour of polishing the

Rusted surfaces of our minds

That were corroded by sugarcoated words.

Why do we look for love outside our homes?

Because we have been warned

To stop being impossible in our homes

And we need venues that allow us to be so.  
Because we have been nesting a devil inside us  
Which carries our alternate but real voice.  
It needs hearing!

Why do we look for love outside our homes?

Because home is a convenient lie.  
Home is either a bitter-sweet coincidence  
or an accident.  
Home is a love-hate story  
or a doctered reality  
which we cannot dare to refuse.

Why do we look for love outside our homes?  
Because at home, love is rationed  
And that's not enough.  
At home, love comes with responsibility  
And that is a burden.

At home, love is political

And that is not fair.

At home, love is conditioned

And that is not honest.



**Mahitha Kasireddi:** She is from Hyderabad, India. She had been a writer with online magazines Youth Ki Awaaz. She is a former content director at Campus Diaries. Her poems have been published in literary journals such as GloMag, The Ink Drift Magazine, Unbound Emagazine and the Telegram Magazine by the Talking Books, Delhi and in The New Indian Express. She is the writing finalist of the Campus Diaries 25 Under 25 2016 National Contest. She's certified by the University of Iowa for completing the

International Writing Program MOOC on How writers write fiction 2016: Storied Women. Her poems are also to be published in an anthology by Author Press India called Women Poetess: Within and Beyond Shore.



## REMEMBRANCE

Someday you too

may forget me,

in fact,

we are all forgotten somewhere in time.

The long dark shadows of night

are forgotten

by sunbathed verandahs,

with queued up pickle jars

delightfully basking in golden rays.

I shall remain like an ancient relic,  
carved desire in stone,  
standing still; waiting,  
on moon blanched nights.

Meanwhile, flowers will bloom  
and at times you might look at the melting melancholy of  
the sunset sky  
and wonder,  
what makes you feel so akin to it?

And someday, on a lonely trail  
of a misty dream,  
you might feel me  
and our deep desired kisses,  
and realize,  
that I am missing  
since long.



**Mallika Bhaumik:** She had been a student of literature and did her masters in English Literature from the University of Calcutta. She is passionate about writing and many of her poems and stories have been published in National and International anthologies, well-known magazines. She is an event planner by profession and is fond of music, travelling and cooking. She lives with her husband and sons in Kolkata and is a proud Kolkatan.



## **TELL ME, WITH THE WEIGHT OF YOUR WORDS ON MY SHOULDERS**

Tell me, with the weight of your words on my shoulders,  
How to move on from this second to the next;  
You've been sullied with a spark so foreign to time  
They'll need the demotion of dialects  
And the slaughtering of Sound itself.  
Light cannot see your tears come and go,  
But it knows, and it shows me,  
It shows me how much you hurt.  
In a world where the Big Things remain unuttered  
And the Truth has no face and no name to go by



**Mathew Jasper:** He is a poet and medical student. He is based in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. He has been writing since high school and has won prizes for extempore and writing, besides poetry. He is an avid reader and appreciator of all genres of poetry. Mathew is also an upcoming pianist and composer. He can be reached [atmathew.j.jasper@gmail.com](mailto:atmathew.j.jasper@gmail.com)



## THE OBSESSED

Heads bobbing up and down,  
hands getting pulled and pushed,  
knees jutting out, folding back,  
a few late night stragglers  
at a brightly lit gym  
seem like mannequins  
on a zombie run.

How do you deal with a dream,  
a sizzling figment that leaked  
like the jeers of the paint or  
the odour of the crowd?



**Late Mushtaque Ali Khan Babi AKA Max Babi:** Max was a multilingual writer, poet who liked a wide variety of formats – whose life was full of oxymoronic shades, a polymath who went from being a specialist to a generalist to a versatilist. Mentoring by being a catalyst enthralled him, he wrote on serendipity and intuition, conducted workshops on a range of subjects and topics. He was a very friendly Santa Claus.



## **YOU CHERISH ME**

I cherish and adore the quiet moment when love bloomed

The exuberance of the new bond that formed anew  
between us

When you whispered I love you and held my arm

I smiled back at you shyly with tears of joy

Your presence calms my fears and gives me strength

Our love was meant to be and every moment I'm with you

I find comfortable unlimited joy kindness and peace

Your affection so tender and caring makes my day

The pleasures of love we share cheer me up

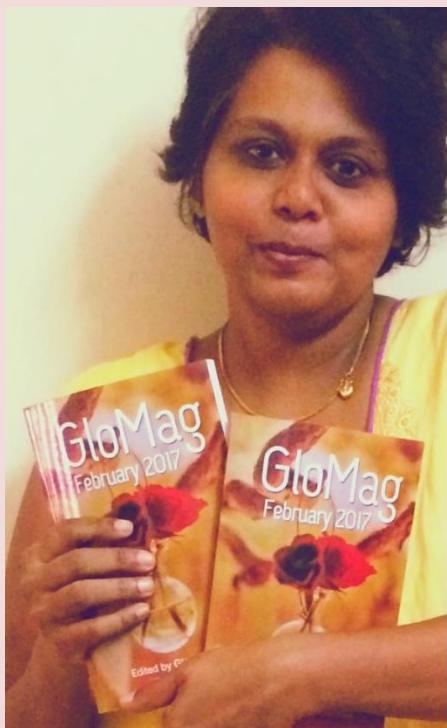
As I write this poem thinking of our love makes me smile

I want to paint the blue sky with words of love spoken

I want to treasure and cherish every single moment of  
togetherness

I'm glad you chose me to be with you forever

You are the only one for me my love till eternity



**Merlyn Alexander:** I hail from Nagercoil. Surrounded by nature all around our district, I feel blessed that nature has lots to offer for my poems. Other than writing my hobbies include painting, craft, travelling, music, reading and cooking. I'm a blogger and I have a cookery blog. I would love to publish a cookery book someday. My collection of poems in a book. Gimme some time.



## **DETECTIVE POETIC JOHNSON HERE**

December 1st 2016,

detective Johnson here.

I see my shrink for the 1st time,

I'm low maintenance, one every 3 months,

Dr. Pennypecker. He is tight ass conservative type

with a raisin dry personality who tries to keep sober

and focused so he can focus on me.

I'm a grade 3 drop out with a degree

in elementary school bullshit.

I ask him how his children are.

“I only have one, let’s focus on YOU!”

Nice haircut, Dr. Pennypecker,  
have you ever noticed how the poor people  
who usually come here, are Mexicans,  
and they all can afford a \$60 a month cell phone?

“Let’s stay focused!”

I tell Dr. Pennypecker I love Jesus, I love the Holy Ghost,  
I love the Father; most of these Mexicans do too.

With all these rain clouds up above outside this window  
here,

I believe we are all together until I pass.

“Now that is interesting, let’s focus on that!”

I tell Dr. Pennypecker when I get upset about something  
I know is my fault and I do have problems  
sleeping but I don’t dwell on that too much.

“Let’s focus on that!”

Is 20 milligrams of Citalopram, antidepressants, generic,  
enough or should we cut it back?

Oh no, don't do that Dr. Pennypecker. By the way, Dr. Pennypecker,

how do you cut your hair in the back when you have your own Wal-Mart

Pro Clipper Haircutting Kit set on # 2?

"I put a paper back there and I put a mirror back there and I sort of do,

no, no, let's not focus on that!"

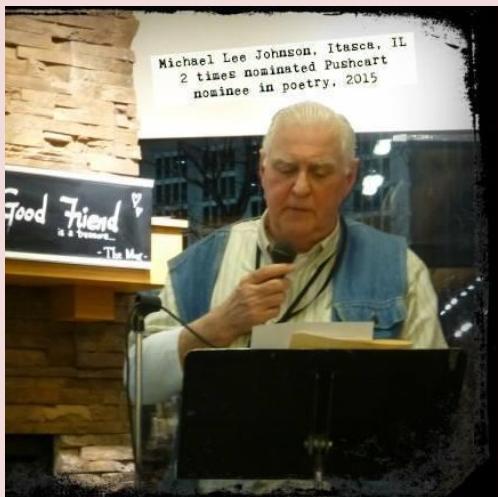
I walk out the door ready for my next appointment 3 months down the road.

I open the door for a stranger ready for his appointment; I say, "have a good day."

He is so self-centered, that his long hair and the way he moves back and forth

sways, swings, doesn't say anything he is so damn self-absorbed in his own gray cloud.

This was my day with Dr. Pennypecker.



**Michael Lee Johnson:** He lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era. He is a Canadian and USA citizen. Today he is a poet, editor, publisher, freelance writer, amateur photographer, small business owner in Itasca, Illinois. He has been published in more than 930 small press magazines in 33 different countries or republics, and he edits 10 poetry sites. Michael is the author of *The Lost American: From Exile to Freedom*, several chapbooks of poetry, including *From Which Place the Morning Rises* and *Challenge of Night and Day*, and *Chicago Poems*. He also has over 134 poetry videos on YouTube as of 2015: He was nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards for poetry 2015 & Best of the Net 2016. He is also the editor/publisher of anthology, *Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze*: A second poetry anthology, *Dandelion in a Vase of Roses*.



## A JOURNEY INTO THE MISTY WOODS

When the day was so filled with calm  
And when rain had finally to the hills come  
Asked her to make a journey with me  
Into the woods unknown moist and misty,

She haply agreed and nodded her head  
To go with me through the road that bred  
Half visible wondrous serene sights  
Covered by translucent curtain white,

We heard the chirpings of cicadas true,  
held on palms nascent drops of dew,  
And as we our journey thus made  
Through woods by mist so laid-

We thought we found us as if new  
Given perhaps another birth long due  
We thought we had a tryst with trees  
Which held many myths and mysteries,

The songs of hills, the murmur of streams,  
Finding God in pantheistic dreams,  
All came and descended upon us  
Through the woods of mist as we passed.



**Moinak Dutta: WELCOME! JULEY! BON JOUR! CIAO!**

Me? I am nothing...I'm not a conscious poet...I just scribble;  
For scribbling is like singing spontaneously...It is like  
dancing loving the movements of body...So I live...So I wish  
to depart...



## VII

All I can do with memory is wield a quiet, private smile  
while clenching something in the chest.  
Twisted by a legitimate selfhood to confront its monopoly.

## VIII

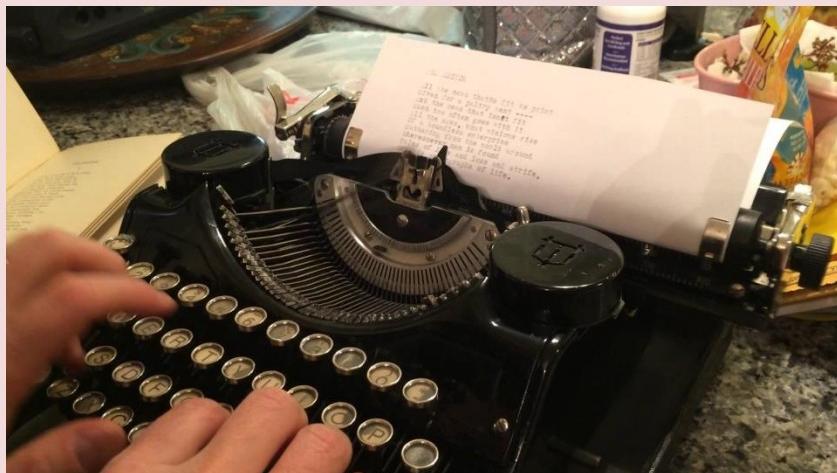
Directing of the centrifugal and centripetal forces of change  
I am a direct challenge to all that you hold dear  
arriving at a new frontier; it's a one-person revolution.

## IX

Against all the gender rules, I am turning incoherent.  
I am converting oddments of memory into  
a cohesive narrative. I am like that jumbo, up in the sky.



**Nandini Sahu:** She is a major voice in Indian English poetry, is an Associate Professor of English in IGNOU, New Delhi, India; she is a creative writer, theorist and folklorist; she is the author/editor of eleven books; has been widely published in India, U.S.A., U.K., Africa and Pakistan. Dr.Sahu is a double gold medalist in English literature, the award winner of All India Poetry Contest, Shiksha Rattan Purashkar and Poiesis Award of Honour, 2015. She is the Chief Editor and Founder Editor of two bi-annual refereed journals, Interdisciplinary Journal of Literature and Language(IJLL) and Panorama Literaria. Her areas of research interest cover New Literatures, Critical Theory, Folklore and Culture Studies, Children's Literature, American Literature and ELT. [www.kavinandini.blogspot.in](http://www.kavinandini.blogspot.in)



## DEAD FLOWERS

Over years, we shared rooms

Some secrets and a typewriter.

Writing poems about young love,

Click of keys on dull afternoons

Lick of my fingers across your neck

Every night. Poems on paper.

Poems on flesh.

Poems everywhere, till we can't breathe without sneezing  
in

rhymes.

At the end of our affair, you threw the typewriter

Across the room

Where it fractures my skull, black ink mixes with my blood,  
What a \*\*\*\* mess we make.

There are men waiting outside  
On the street.

Waiting to build a house  
Waiting to create a house out of nothing,  
But dead remains of the earth.

They're squatting on the roads  
And their groins stink of madhouses.

I scratch dead skin of flakes  
And watch as the house  
Waits to be built,  
Waits to be created,  
Out of nothing, but hate.



**Nilesh Mondal:** Born in 1993, he has lived most of his life in the small town of Asansol. An undergraduate in engineering by choice, he stumbled onto poetry by chance. His works have been published in various magazines and e-journals like *Bombay Literary Review*, *Café Dissensus*, *Muse India*, *Inklette*, *Kitaab*, *Coldnoon Travel Poetics*, etc. He currently works as a writer for Terribly Tiny Tales and Thought Catalog, as prose editor for Moledro Magazine, and is an intern at Inklette Magazine. His first book of poetry, *Degrees of Separation* (Writers Workshop), was released in June, 2017 and debuted at #2 of the Amazon Bestseller list of Poetry.



 Earth From Space – Apollo 17  
NASA Langley Research Center

12/7/1972

Image # EL-1996-00155

## HOME SWEET HOME

Hidden in plain sight, protected from the roving eye of the Hubble

Stands a lonely green world shrouded by a swathe of nebulous white

Lounging indolently on the cusp of vast nothingness...

...or is it everything'ness'?

Perched precariously on the outward edge of a spiral

As inconsequential as a dandelion seed floating on the breeze

Its sparkling white cliffs compete with jagged grey mountains

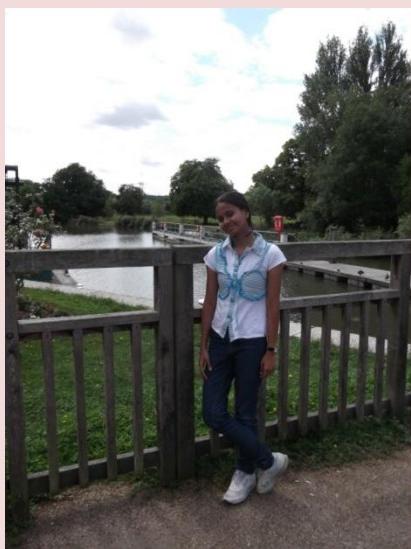
Even as an emerald-blue liquid holds centre stage.

A curtain of purple and green suddenly cloaks the  
nebulously white

For infinitesimal minutes

Then the fulcrum shifts again in one swell  
swoop

Revealing once again the insipid sea of swirling white.



**Nivedita Karthik:** She is a graduate in Integrated Immunology from the University of Oxford who likes reading books and travelling. She is an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer and has given many performances. She loves any form of creative writing (especially poems) and writes them whenever she can.



the beasts  
awaken  
a lone wolf howls  
a owl mutters  
the velvet sky  
stirs and  
the moon, a dollop of ice  
the stars get a frost bite, amble  
to the nearest exit  
photosynthesis  
the beast  
weeps  
and the its hairy face  
becomes Deep Blue



**Nivedita Narsapuram:** She is an unschooled student of poetry and prose. She writes to make sense of the chaotic world around through her stories and poetry. Among her other interests, she loves exploring Wisconsin and soaking in the warmth of its people and its harsh winters. She blogs at: [nnivedita.com](http://nnivedita.com).



## **WHAT MATTERS MOST**

It's the time you invest,  
Not the by-products of thoughts never made sure.  
It's the company you keep,  
Not the gifts you give.

It's not the comfort of life you give  
It's the comfort you share.  
It's not your accomplishments  
Noted by your absence,  
It's the achievements  
Portrayed by your presence.

It's never found in doing,  
What's most important is in 'being'.  
It's never an 'I thought',  
It's always an 'I know'.

Don't you ever think  
That your hard-work  
Putting food on the table  
Paying the bills and as such able  
Are the most important.  
While certainly they are important  
They are not the most important!

The things you provide for your loved ones  
Should never spend more time than you do  
With those you provided them for  
Spend quality time with your loved once.  
Don't give things to do that for you.



**Oluwatosin S. Olabode:** He is a speaker, poet, blogger and writer. He is a Christian, an idealist and a 'future thinker'. He resides in Jos, Nigeria. He goes by the stage name, Double\_ST (SST), which stand for Strictly Simple from Tosin-given to him as a result of the simplicity of his message. He writes Poetry, nonfiction and a little bit of fiction; including drama depending on the context. His works centers on God, man and life.



## **MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL**

What makes a woman so attractive

Is it her limpid eyes,

Or her compact body

Where is the magic mirror to show the world

Who she really is?

Is it the sensuous curve of her hips

Or the sweet smile on her lips

Which hides the secrets

In her heart, that she sows into

the tapestry of her soul

Perhaps it's in the warmth of her love,  
The unselfish sacrifices she does every day  
The million tiny losses of personal freedom  
That give way to service and beyond

For truly what a woman wants  
And rarely gets, is for her man  
And her children to understand  
That her joy in them will be compounded  
When they know that she is Love,  
She is Hope,  
She is the Light  
Their beacon of strength, the primal glow of life

Such a woman, who is loved and recognized  
Is truly the answer to 'Mirror, mirror on the wall,  
Isn't this woman the fairest of all?'



**Padmini Rambhatla:** She is a homemaker and Creative writing teacher who enjoys her different roles as loving wife to an awesome and caring hubby, and as mom to her two sons, Rahul and Arjun. She loves the company of her students and strives to make them enjoy reading, writing and using their imagination to create wholesome and interesting stories. She enjoys watching movies in English, Tamil and Hindi. Padmini dabbles in art occasionally and loves cooking a variety dishes for friends and family.



## **UNLOVING**

I say and do these things to you  
When I am cross within  
Grappling with the gashes in my heart  
The pain of raw scars throbbing

Ire blinds me from your feelings,  
It reduces the world to my woe alone.  
As it spurts words and reflexes harsh  
You, my love, absorb it sadly willing...

And when the clouds have parted  
To allow a little sunshine into me  
I see you still kind, smiling and serving  
My heart aching with love for you

Ah, beloved, the honey I swig,  
I wince with remorse wishing  
Restraint overcame me  
As you looked back with love.

Argh! I stop by a mirror reflecting  
The grey, chapped skin on my appeal  
I stare at how ugly I can be  
For like you, I am not loving or forgiving.



**Panjami Anand:** I am an occult practitioner by profession and I see every day it is hard to be honest in a brutal world that demands the best façade even at the cost of one's inner well-being. Sometimes it helps to know that we are all fighting secret battles and we are not the only ones in pain. I love to observe human relationships and nothing inspires my writing more. Thus the dominating theme of all my writings are conflicts and triumphs of the same. I thank each and every one who has encouraged me to better my expression. Gratitude for reading!



Gandhari closed her eyes

Kunthi slept with the Elements

Draupadi married five men

And desired Karna too.

Hidimbi wrestled with Beema

Mothered Gatokkaj in the wrestling.

Kannaki burnt Madurai down

Urmila suffered pangs of abstinence

Manimekala donned the sanyasi robes

All my Mothers

Feminine Mystique?



**Parasuram Ramamoorthi:** Poet with three published volumes of Poetry. Norwich Musings ( 2003); Fire courts Water 2009; Neem Gita 2011; Playwright with twelve plays published and Performed. Autism Advocate and Pioneer in the field of Drama for Autism. Chairman VELVI [www.velvi.org](http://www.velvi.org)



### **THE CATERPILLAR BEDROOM**

A small, silken nest strung high  
in a hawthorn tree branch  
he cuts and carries to his bedroom.

A nest full of squirms  
freshly hatched tent caterpillars  
blaze a bristle of red hairs.

Places the branch on his window  
watches their explore  
white trails up the glass

others follow. His finger  
breaks a trail to see them  
return down same line,

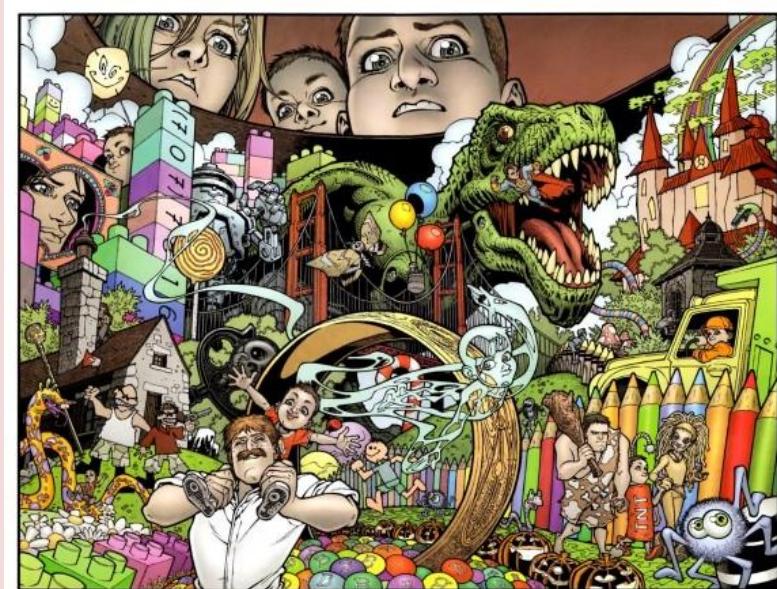
until one bridges the gap  
and others follow.

Soon white threads cover

ceilings, walls, furniture. Exploratory  
expeditions. Delighted he ffingerswipes  
across their routes.



**Paul Brookes:** He was shop assistant, security guard, postman, admin., assistant, lecturer, poetry performer, with "Rats for Love"; his work was included in "Rats for Love: The Book", Bristol Broadsides, 1990. First chapbook was "The Fabulous Invention Of Barnsley", Dearne Community Arts, 1993. Read his work on BBC Radio Bristol, had writing workshop for sixth formers broadcast on BBC Radio Five Live. He was recently published in Clear Poetry, Nixes Mate, The Bezine, The Bees Are Dead and others. Forthcoming two illustrated chapbooks "The Spermbot Blues" published by OpPRESS (summer, 2017) and tentatively in autumn "The Headpoke" by Alien Buddha Press.



## A WALK THROUGH MY MIND

Welly Boots and Waders

Right up to your waist

Rubber Gloves and Waterproofs

Coloured to your taste

Mind your head on entering

Be careful not to slip

There's lots of sludge upon the ground

Inside the mind of Philip

You'll hack through the thickest jungle

See wild life of all kinds

Get bitten by enormous bugs

Not found in many minds

You'll need a torch for the dark bits

Where mosquito's dare not go

And make sure that you've got I.D.

For the Adult movie show



**Late Philip G. Bell:** He was born in West London and became a professional in the field of vibration and acoustics. He was awarded a Fellowship of the Society of Environmental Engineers. He has two sons and a daughter and 3 grandsons. He had written a number of technical

papers, which were published internationally, before turning attention to writing poetry, short stories and a children's novel. He also founded The Young Poet Society. He has published a novel, "The Elfin Child," which is available through Amazon, Barnes and Noble and at [www.elfinchild.com](http://www.elfinchild.com)

In December 2013, he was diagnosed with terminal Motor Neuron Disease and died in 2015.



## VOID

I don't want to live a lie  
I don't want to wear the face of a corpse  
decaying existence if I have had any  
safely left in the desert to be eaten  
by the vultures

I know my journey will end up in a void  
I am a lonesome man  
lonesome is my desire  
lonely are those stars  
lonely is the moon  
lonely are my eyes

why do I perceive a deep sense of void

In everything?

for me raindrop never promise a river

grain of sand never promise a desert

I am oscillating in between the two

and an oasis all that I pine for

to the naked eyes

to the thirsty eyes

to the eyes full of sands

everything look like the mirage

I can't cross myself over

I can't cross the desert

and time fleets away

telling sandy are the ways of life

a lone camel treading



**Prahallad Satpathy:** He hails from the Balangir district of Odisha (India). He is a bilingual poet. He writes both in Odia and English. So far he has published three anthology of poetry in Odia. His poems have been published in national anthologies like Scaling heights and international anthologies like Global Anthology on Peace and Harmony, Happy Isle, Feelings International, etc. Dr. Satpathy is a Reader in economics, working at present in Rajendra autonomous college, Balangir (Odisha). He has represented Odisha Sahitya Academy as honorary member for two consecutive terms.



## **YOUR HANDS IN MINE, FOREVER**

This birth, you did the saat pheras with me, your hands in mine, forever!

I know, you too know, we are there for each other, beyond our earthly existence, 'cos your hands in mine, forever.

The world may be against us, or you, or me, but I am unfazed, reassured, 'cos your hands in mine, forever.

Together we climb the evolutionary ladder; sometimes you slip, sometimes I falter, but you are there to support, 'cos your hands in mine forever.

Let's together thank the Universe, for not tearing us asunder, but keeping your hands in mine forever, till we blend in the cosmos, both indistinguishable from each other!



**Pratima Apte:** I am an English Hons. Graduate of Delhi University. I am a homemaker, recently turned grandmother! I used to write sporadically in the Pune edition's Women's page of the Indian Express. I love reading and writing, words are my world. My interests in reading are self-help books, spiritual and cookbooks and fiction. Books by Ayn Rand, Taylor Caldwell, Leon Uris, J Krishnamurthy, Dan Brown have been my favourites, as also layman's homeopathy, astrology and medical books.



The fragrant flower of love  
Blossoms in their hearts  
Lights up their cute faces  
Puts twinkle in their eyes  
Ignites spark in their souls  
Together, they fly up in the sky  
Travel from stars to stars  
Make their own heaven.



**Praveen Ranjit:** He is a creative writer who gets inspiration from nature to social issues and enjoys writing poems on love, life, compassion, happiness, human relations nature's beauty etc. At a very young age he developed his writing skills, published poems in various anthologies and periodicals and received many awards of excellence. He was a professor in the Department of Commerce, St. Albert's college, Kochi, Kerala from 1981 to 2014.



## THE MIDNIGHT TALE

Let us shine together

Through the midnight blue

Let us walk together

Around the blue fields of heaven

Fulfilling our hopes and dream

Dancing in the tune of a peaceful forest

With smiling orb, in the world of bliss

Transforming our pain into joy

Looking at the glittering stars

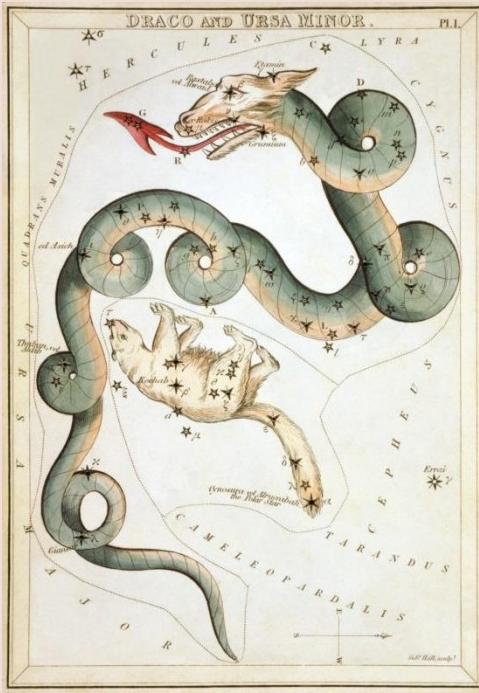
Whistling the flute of divine love

Through the night's womb

Let us sing together  
In the peaceful silence  
Through the midnight blue.



**Preety Bora:** The poetess, Mrs Preety Bora was born in the beautiful state of Assam, and is from a small city named Golaghat. Her poems have been published in various anthologies and magazines. She is also contributing to GloMag regularly. She writes, "Poetry is my shadow, and I can't live without it".



*("Draco and Ursa Minor", plate 1 in *Urana's Mirror*, a set of celestial cards accompanied by A familiar treatise on astronomy ... by Jehoshaphat Aspin. This image is available from the United States Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division under the digital ID cph.3g10050)*

## THE NIGHT OF THE SERPENT

When Night begins her rule

the stars sing

a million - oh! A billion -

little stories - each

an epic in its realm,

but a footnote in mine.

The bull over the west;

can you hear his groans?

The hunter

with drawn sword and bow

and his dog at his heels

claim their gory trophy

and sing a victory chant!

The bear looks on,

its gaze turned northward,

tranquil and unconcerned.

But the night is mine -

The many-headed serpent.

Run away to your houses,

frail men,

beware my slithering children!

Safe between your walls,

lamps lighted,

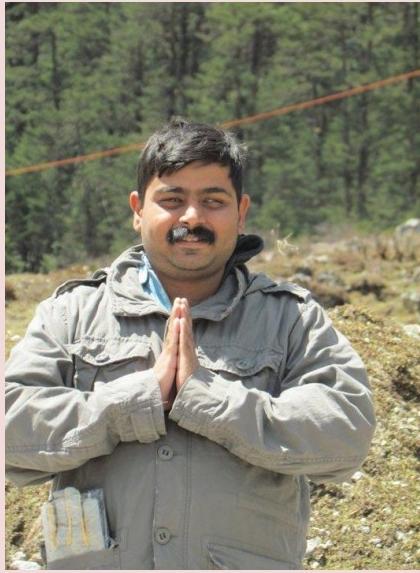
you open your windows

to let in a sliver of moonlight  
and shut it again  
when you glimpse my blazing form!

My writhing figure  
dancing on the zenith,  
my tongues aflame,  
and my tail in gracious curves  
rule the night!

The moon shines dejectedly  
in waning glory,  
and the planets flee at my approach -  
The night is mine!

Know me, fear me,  
I am the malevolent  
shatterer of worlds;  
**I AM THE SERPENT!**



**Raamesh Gowri Raghavan:** He moonlights as an award-winning copywriter by day and daylights as an award-wanting poet by night, and sandwiches an archaeology course, running two literary clubs, astronomy, the occasional trek, some peer counselling for suicide prevention, and learning languages in between. He thinks he is funny, but his friends vehemently disagree.



## **SOUL SEARCHING ALWAYS...**

Where are those souls?

What happened to those  
in a drift dragged away  
sudden before expectation?

Or after full round of completion?  
departed big or small,  
memory haunts us always  
sobering our daily routine  
rhythm less spanning empty.

Where are they, clinging to us  
in endearing ways, how so many?

Where are they now?

Where unto did they go hiding?

A shift to be away from the  
Clutter of the scheming crowd  
Or move of their choice to  
a remote shining galaxy twinkling  
and counting the itinerant mass; or  
Playing hide and seek amidst  
the puffy, dark and white clouds,  
reaching seamless to the edge?  
Taking an oath not to be reborn  
In this mundane earth, if given  
an option. Soul searches for ever  
this unanswered query.



**S. Radhamani:** She was born in Madras, did B.A. English, obtained M.A. English from Venkateswara University, Tirupati, did her doctoral thesis on W.H.Auden's Plays, subsequently obtained PGDTE from CIEFL (Hyderabad). A Professor of English with 31 years of teaching experience in a post-graduate and research institution, published four books of poems and one book of short story, widely published and anthologized, guided M.Phil research scholars and PhD candidates, and a reviewer and critic. Also published poems and short stories in many websites, presented papers in National and International conferences.



## **COLOURS OF RAIN**

Red tiled roofs

That breathed fire in summer

Are green velvet now

The blue sky

In million intermediate shades

Finally, has turned dark grey

Black charcoal

Orange Flames

Golden bhuttas roasting

And your lips purple

With blood

Of fresh succulent jaamuns

Rain is just water drops falling down

Transparent

Colorless



**Rajendra Pradhan:** He was born on October 5, 1959. He is a qualified civil engineer. He is a businessman and the CEO of Pradhan Builders. His hobbies include sculpture, photography, writing and poetry (in Marathi and English). All these are self-taught arts. He has published an anthology of poems. He has won competitions in photography. He has won a Maharashtra State Level award for his sculpture in a nationwide contest held by Prafulla Dahanukar Art Foundation, Mumbai.



## **NO, I MAY NOT RETURN**

No, I may not return.

Can't? Won't? Ever?

Yes, that's destiny,

self-scripted, inflicted.

Had I known

or written the script,

contemplated the end

of the road less travelled?

Had I? Ever?

Past is not a place

to revisit.

Past is not a phase

to re-live.

Past is not a page

to rewrite.

Past is not

past

It's like the slippery sand that slips

dryly from between the fingers,

is gone,

has happened,

is lost.

What time gives first,

it has its ways to take.

Years of careless days

were baits swallowed, fast,  
greedily, unmindful of the cost.

It feels so good, revenge

Teeth clenched, lips joined; silent,  
She raises her arm with a blunt short rod.

It feels so good, revenge!

He fells him down like a dry dead tree.

Not one stroke finish, it's stretched long:

Teeth clenched, lips joined; silent,

Thrice she strikes. She takes her time.

Alive he's kept to feel to the end.

It feels so good, revenge!

With each connect she curses him twice.

With each curse breaks a spell.

Teeth clenched, lips joined; silent.

Her python-eyes hypnotize,

Keep her prey transfixed, silent.

It feels so good, revenge.

There lies the broken spell.

There lies the opened skull:

Teeth clenched, lips joined; silent.

It feels so good, revenge.

Clutch your anger tight

Clutch your anger tight,

hold it close,

hold it fast,

don't let it slip,  
don't let it fade  
away with time.

You need it in your lines.

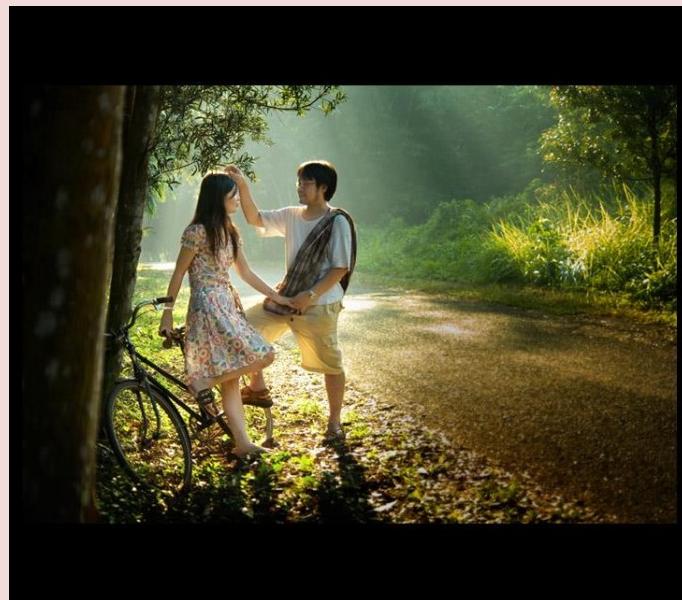
You need it in your lines

That life writes  
That days throw  
On your mind  
On your kind  
For you want to  
Clutch your anger tight.



**Rajnish Mishra:** He is a poet, writer, translator and blogger born and brought up in Varanasi, India. He is the editor of PPP Ezine, a poetry ezine. He has a blog on poetry, poetics and aesthetic pleasure:

<https://poetrypoeticspleasure.wordpress.com>



## WORDS

Trapped in silences -  
Flaying,  
Thrashing,  
Enmeshed in the echo  
Of memories.

Words.....

Stunted,  
Fractured,  
Hobbling  
In search

Of meaning.

Words.....

Hunting

For words,

To stem

The agony,

The angst

And,

To heal.

My Words.....

Hungry

For the touch,

The caress,

Of

Your words.....



**Ramendra Kumar:** What would you call a person who is a writer by passion, a story teller by obsession, a mentor by aspiration and a communicator by profession? You would probably call him insane. Well, we call him Ramen.  
[www.ramendra.in](http://www.ramendra.in)



## THE UNBEARABLE YELLOWNESS OF A YELLOW BEING

yellow Me lives in An  
yellow Mustard yellow  
yellow House with  
yellow Walls. Through the  
yellow Window one can see An  
yellow Road winding its way to An  
yellow Hill. An  
yellow Tree with  
yellow Blossoms greet me every

yellow Morning. I sleep on an  
yellow Bed and watch An  
yellow Sun pouring in through the  
yellow Foliage. In the  
yellowest Room of this  
yellow House resides An  
yellow Serpent who when roused from her  
yellow Slumber lasting many  
yellow Centuries slither into my bed throwing An  
yellow Coil around me. She hisses, “Hey  
yellow Poet, write with my forked  
yellow Tongue. Write two  
yellow Poems at a stroke, one for  
yellow Me and one for  
yellow You.” That’s when I shed my  
yellow Skin and become An  
yellow Phallus Stylus Pen squirting  
yellow Ink.



**Ravi Shanker (Ra Sh):** He translates from Malayalam and Tamil to English and vice versa. Published English translations of stories by Bama (Tamil), Mother Forest (from Malayalam) and Waking is Another Dream (Sri Lankan Tamil Poetry) and for Anthologies of Dalit literature published by OUP and Penguin India. Published poems in magazines, journals and anthologies. He is one of the five contributing poets to the anthology, "A Strange Place Other Than Earlobes" (five voices seventy poems). A collection of his poetry, "Architecture of Flesh" was published by Paperwala in 2015. E-mail: [shankeran@gmail.com](mailto:shankeran@gmail.com)



## BANKING ON RESERVOIRS

### (i) The river bank

Sand slips from under the feet falling into waters  
that wink and demur a little, dragging away a few  
weary grains stomped into shapes of trudging feet  
by some persistent heartbeats. Still thoughts  
tilting the balance of moving life, churning the watery  
mirror into concentric, muddy memory pools  
  
I watch them go and die, half assuaged yet unable  
to crush an indistinct murmur. They will be back  
  
I know where they live

## **(ii) The love bank**

Gold-ringed, a dream sits with silver fetters on ankles  
that never forgot their penchant for dance. A flower  
or love comes bearing within it kite strings that bead  
my woes, threads that rip me open. If I wander away  
from their fray, they tug, pull and lasso my steps.

Love morphs into a disquieting play

Throw your flowers into the placid river or my heart  
upon the vermillion-smattered stone, I swear  
either won't break my silence. Set me free yet believe  
not in me but in your own once sane self.

A noose can always pretend to be a necklace  
but only if you trust it enough to let it be



**Reena Prasad:** She is a poet/writer from India, currently living in Sharjah (United Arab Emirates). Her poems have been published in several anthologies and journals e.g. The Copperfield Review, First Literary Review-East, Angle Journal, Poetry Quarterly, Lakeview International Journal etc. She is also the Destiny Poets UK's, Poet of the year for 2014 and one of the editors of The Significant Anthology released in July 2015. More recently, she was adjudged second in the World Union Of Poet's competition, 2016. She writes at Butterflies Of Time.



*(Himalayas (1933) by Nicholas Roerich, Courtesy: Nicholas Roerich Museum New York)*

## **LONGING FOR THE MOUNTAINS**

Mountains are mighty snakes coiled 'round/blissfully  
abandoned in sleep/grey wraiths  
frolicking with the sun/playing a game  
of hide and seek.

Serenity floats in the mountain air/light as  
avian dandelion seeds/feline languor  
rides pillion on mists/wakefulness always  
a few reluctant blinks away.

Mountains stand bare in meagreness/rich in gems  
of prehistoric memory/forever  
sparkling like water drops/suspended  
amidst cobwebs of time.

my time in the mountains is numbered/I return  
to my pulsating city/insomnia  
nights with psychedelic dreams/gold rush  
days chasing the clock/worker ants  
living in the moment/huddled  
alone in cold cubicles/far away  
from the sun/gas chambers  
where happiness dies/recreation  
flowing from bottles uncorked/conversation  
gagged by digital devices/never-ending  
diurnal drudgery/without  
hope of salvation/almost.



**Rita Bhattacharjee:** She is a communications consultant, having managed corporate and internal communications for companies across diverse industries and continents, including non-profit organizations. She is the co-founder of Mission Arogya and Arogya HomeCare and has recently relocated from the USA to India to channel her skills towards social entrepreneurship to increase awareness and reduce disparity in public health. A passionate poet, her poetry has been included in anthologies and published in reputed international journals, including The Copperfield Review, Contemporary Literary Review, Camel Saloon, Café Dissensus, About Place Journal, and Kitaab.



## ITINERARY -1

First, we will meet at our spot  
in front of an eternal university  
in a primordial boulevard.

Then, after sometime of  
aimless wandering  
in arid and sinuous streets,  
we will go to a bookshop.

It will be raining  
by the time we get out.  
We will run under a shelter,  
and will wait there- watching

many layers of rain  
battering the dead road.

"Today is the last day on earth,"

I will say. You will nod.

From there we will  
take a memorable auto-ride  
to the home of  
a revolutionary poet.

The poet is old but flamboyant-  
He will speak about his poems,  
about how, an empty teacup  
on a table, can be a poem tomorrow,  
and how, it can be a war cry  
in the happening revolution,  
the day after tomorrow.

It will rain again.



**Ro Hith:** He is a poet and a medico from Andhra Pradesh, writing poetry since 7 years. His poetry has been published in various online magazines, including Muse India, The Four Quarterly, Istanbul Review, Kritya, New Mirage Journal and print magazines like Kavya English, which was applauded and complimented by various senior poets. Currently, he is working on his first book of poems, which will be published shortly and an online magazine that deals with progressive poetry and translations from various Indian languages.



## MOJADO

saguaro sweet rain  
thirsty for centuries  
desert behoden  
that exact taste  
each drop sizzling  
crashing the sand below  
patchouli creosote garden  
blossoms once more  
renewed, guided by monsoon winds  
blundering past the Catalinas,  
pounding,  
laughing soaked children

dancing those annual rhythms  
hearing that certain summer fragrance  
blowing across Sonoran July skies  
climbing scorpion porches  
surging washes and ditches  
nesting vultures with doves  
filling our eyes with electric colors blasting  
thunder stomping the bass drum universe  
saturating our souls into humility,  
even prayer,  
until at last we appreciate the parched dearth  
the months we must wait  
so our lives may be again released  
for the next unbroken chain...  
this coming on anyhow savage miracle



**Robert Feldman:** Born in Paterson, New Jersey, he was inspired at an early age by members of Paterson's literary tradition, most notably Louis and Allen Ginsberg and William Carlos Williams. While living in St. Louis, he organized various poetry readings, produced and hosted a community issues news hour and a biweekly bebop jazz radio program on KDNU-FM. It was during this time his interest and admiration for the Beat Generation flourished. Robert was instrumental in publishing some of Arizona's most influential writers such as Drummond Hadley and Michael Gregory, and in 1980, collaborated with Lawrence Ferlinghetti on his Bisbee publication, "Mule Mountain Dreams." He has participated in dozens of poetry readings around the country. Now years later, he continues to write, paint, and play tabla, besides working with high-school students as faculty advisor of the Park Vista Writers Workshop. The body of Robert Feldman's writing and painting can be accessed at [www.albionmoonlight.net](http://www.albionmoonlight.net); he can be reached at [rffeldman@gmail.com](mailto:rffeldman@gmail.com).



## **YOU AND THE BUTTERFLY**

At night,

The butterfly

Sleeps on the moon

But in the day

It takes a nap on you

In my garden and

Here I am;

I can't sleep,

I can't take a nap

Because I am busy

Writing about both of you!



**Romeo della Valle:** Born in a beautiful island named Quisqueya or Hispaniola and from Italian and Spanish parents and coming to America very young with a goal, mainly, to succeed in life and be happy. As a citizen of the world, there is not race, colour, or religious beliefs that would stop me from searching for happiness...I have become through times passed that I am a man with a Vision and a clear mission: 'To spread my message of Love and Peace throughout the World and if my poetry can touch a single soul in the World, then I would gladly die leaving my clear footprints behind!'



## BROKEN MEMORIES

“Have you ever had dreams?”

(Once she asked.)

“... Yes.” – I told. “But my dreams!”.

“Your dreams!?”

“Yeh, .... I can’t tell.”.

“Why?”

“Because they have no languages;

I tried to paint it; but I came to know that,

I can’t find a colour palette for my dreams.

I tried to remember It’s smell

But It was odorless.”

“Then? ...”

(She was curious, her eyebrows rose like a bow.)

“What was your dream about?”

After some moments: - I told

“At last, I linked the scattered pieces of memories.”

(mmmm... she)

“Then found it's language was infinite uncertainty,

It's color was dusty, and smoky.

It was smelled like the sour sweats of a peasant;

the burning stomach of a child;

menstrual bleed of a woman.

It was about faded, candlelight like paled women.

Starving children;

Victims of a massacre, frightened faces of a battlefield;

It was about...

Struggling mankind; the absolute common men.

“Yes! ... You, you... have

Really had dreams....” (She told).



**Saleem Raza (Saleem Kattuchola):** He is a freelance writer and painter, from Kerala, India, working in Doha as a HR & Admin Manager. He writes short stories, poems and travelogues in regional language (Malayalam - India) magazines, periodical and English poems in poems in Saudi Gazette Weekend edition.



## **WHO AM I**

The first milk I sucked

Was my Bong mom's!

The day I ate my first rice

My mom smiled.

As I left baby food & entered into the world of foodies

I smiled!

And enjoying the foodie world till now.

My mom said my first rice

Came from a Tipra field!

Mom used to tell me about her cousins, whom I didn't meet before.

An evening a handsome guest visited us.

What a divine look! Sober smiling man.

"come my child! I'm your boro mama," He said!

Me, the curious child, ran to his arms thinking he is my mom's that cousin

about whom mom used to tell!

After baba it was the warmest hug I got from him!

I found Buddha in him, in his words!

So my first Boro mama,

my first Buddha was a smiling loving Chakma gentleman!

The day I wanted to wear a different saree

My aunt send me a manipuri sari!

So my first different Saree was from a Manipuri loom!

When I tried to dance,

My Mizo friend taught me bamboo dance!

Now my taste buds have tasted sukto, fish curry, but still I  
love godok, bangui, dry fish!

Still champreng steals my heart!

Sachin karta comforts my soul !

With bamboo beats still I try to dance!

I can leave all branded jeweleries

For that silver rangbauh!

But My Lord, who am I?

A bong or a Tripuri?

A Chakma or a Manipuri?

A reang or a mizo?

Which land should I go?

Saving, living, loving

protecting all these like Jatayu.

Now should I strip off my clothes too??

**\*\* Tipra - A tribal community**

**\*\* Boro mama - the eldest maternal uncle**

**\*\* Sukto - a bengali dish**

**\*\* Godok, Bangui - Tribal dishes**

**\*\* Champreng - a tribal instrument**

**\*\* Sachin Karta - The legendary S.D.Barman.**

**\*\* rangbauh = reang necklace made of silver coins**



**Sanhita Sinha:** She is a native of Tripura, is a teacher, a bilingual poet. Her poems got published in different national and international anthologies, journals & magazines like "Heavens above poetry below," "A haiku Treasury," "In our own words," "Scaling heights," "Epitaphs," "Milenge," "IFLAC PEACE ANTHOLOGY," "BETRAYAL," KIRNOKAL," "ANTOHKORON," "RUPANTAR," "PURBHABASH," "GALAXY," etc. Apart from writing she is actively engaged in cultural activities too. She is a regular artist of television and radio too.



The evening shades crept softly. Softly.

The brittle creepers stirred a little

The sunlight whittled down

Bit by bit.

The gulmohar tree fronting my house

Furtively snuck the departing rays of a mellow sun

Its red turning yellow.

Drifting clouds also filched a few

Many more gold-filchers still in the queue.

A grasshopper zoomed into my room  
Majestically floating on its body slender.  
Was it searching for its El Dorado?  
Lo! It hopped on to my folder  
Every second growing bolder.Bolder.  
It was the plant - the plant!  
Impeccably painted on the folder  
Which had it in its grip.  
Riding, sliding, gliding, it settled on the folder  
Trying to merge with the green of the painted plant  
This way and that trying to slant.  
Ah, it had found its El Dorado!  
Not for it the dining table casserole  
The bean bag, the kitchen rag or the stool  
Or the French fries lying on the plate.  
It fell for the bait  
Of an almost real -looking plant

Painted on the folder.

Bolder it grew. Bolder.

I watched, neck outstretched, mouth gaping

As it nestled closer.

Closer as in the company of a friend

Long lost.

To and fro, grasping, clasping.

The painting and the grasshopper glowed on

Sustaining each other.

Under the grasshopper's ministrations

The painting seemed to have come to life.

Having found its gold, it grew bolder

Bolder. There was some hustle, some bustle

Hush, did I hear the painted plant rustle?



**Santosh Bakaya:** Academician-novelist - poet-essayist, Dr Santosh Bakaya, has been internationally acclaimed for her poetic biography of Mahatma Gandhi, Ballad of Bapu, [Vitasta publishers India, 2015] for her collection of peace poems, Where are the lilacs? [Authors press, India, 2016] and her book of essays: Flights from my terrace [Earlier an e-book on Smashwords [ 2014] now has an updated printed version, Authors press INDIA, 2017]. Extensively interviewed and awarded, her latest poetry book: Under the apple boughs, has just gone to the press and she is giving finishing touches to her two novels, one a satire on higher education and the other, a breezy love story.



I have known you in pleasure and sorrow,  
I have known you yesterday and will know you tomorrow,  
I have known you in bright sunlight,  
I have known you in the darkness of the night.

I know your contents- water and salt,  
I know you come when it is and it isn't my fault,  
You fall from the depths of my eyes and my mind,  
You fall and help me unwind.

Through you I express my joy to my dears,  
Through you I express my lonely fears,

When you fall off my heart becomes lighter,  
That is the power of you, my little tear.



**Sara Bubber:** I am studying Human Development from MSU, Baroda. In my free time (sometimes even during classes) I love looking out of the window especially when it rains. I love reading, listening to music and spending time with my dogs. My dogs are my favourite people in the world.



## SLIP AND CYCLE

Zero-point/slashed from the center/red eye  
staring back from the void/pouring out  
with aqua hues of truth/too hot to handle/  
too elusive to grasp/slipping from your hands/  
as it must/as it was always meant to be

Fingertips spark golden memories/miracles  
were almost activated/couldn't quite materialize  
fully/some dreams are simply not designed  
to manifest/some lines only cross at one point/  
while others always cycle energy toward the future



**Scott Thomas Outlar:** He hosts the site 17Numa.wordpress.com where links to his published poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, reviews, and books can be found.



**Suzette Portes San Jose:** She is from Philippines, is an international contributor of poetry and art, has contributed to 10 books between 2015 and 2017, and is a book cover artist. Each of her poems is written using a painting for visuals.



## **COMPASSION**

Compassion!

Isn't a difficult term?

in this materialistic world.

Society deprived of it,

leading towards shallowness.

People possessing kindness,

becoming fewer day by day.

Gone are the days,

When people acquired,

love, respect & compassion for all.

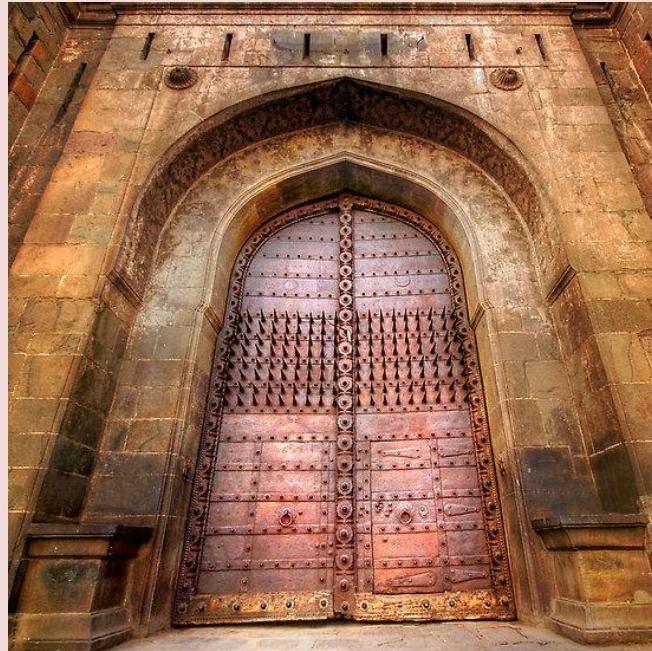
Now they have profundity,

of hate & jealousy for all.

Is this the same world?  
where so many noble soul resided,  
giving message of love & compassion for all.



**Shamenaz:** I reside in Allahabad. I am a freelance writer, passionate reader, blogger, and poet, with many published poems in E-journals & magazines in India. I have presented papers in India and abroad. I am in the Editorial board of journals: Literary Miscellany, Cyber Literature, Research Access, Expression, The Context & IJRHS (Jordan). I am the Guest Editor of 'The Context' Volume 2, issue 3. I have served as a Chairperson of Women Cell of my College, AIET & Cultural Incharge, AIET.



## **DOOR-A WALLED FORTRESS**

Banging on doors, clanging

Facets of life changing

As night and day separates

Souls traipsing

On a very fine balance

Wooden panels, untouched

Is it a dream?

To unleash mysteries from within

Change, savouring

Floodgates holding back memories

A touch here and a touch there

To search wherefore,

Seemingly listless

Fulfilling a poignant silence

From behind the walled fortress

Nuances of life unfolding

A pageant of colourfulness

The patterns keep repeating

Beating a staccato

Like drums resounding

On the wayside temple front

Life's many hues

Projects itself in shapes and sizes

Colours of the mind, never withstanding

The beauty of a being as a whole

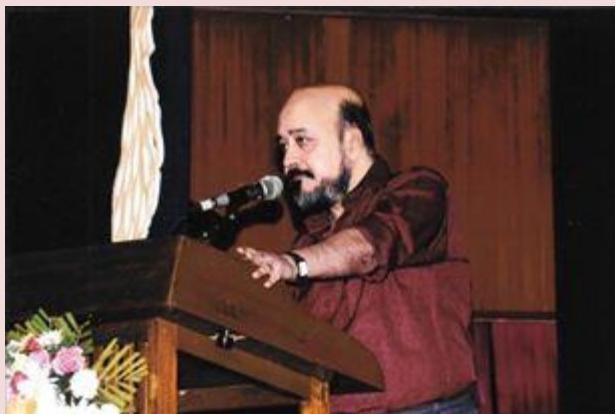


**Shobha Warrier:** Born near Trichur in Kerala, Shobha was highly influenced by her maternal grandfather who was a distinguished Sanskrit scholar. Shobha has a keen interest in languages, be it prose or poetry. She has also worked as a teacher in schools for some time.



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And we settle down in our easy chairs, and easily dissect the vicious news and flavour of sizzling flesh, we deliver essays of easy judgment from those righteous volcanoes spewed a thousand years ago, and our easy evenings lapse into settled nights, and we breathe in the fumes and dream of the times when we were as happy as we are now; and the suffering rolls again and again like waves of urgent foam towards our feet, and we always manage to leap away with a laugh or a cry behind a final curtain of relief.



**Shreekumar Varma:** He is an Indian author, playwright, newspaper columnist and poet. He received the R. K. Narayan Award for Excellence in Writing in English in 2015. He is known for the novels Lament of Mohini, Maria's Room, Devil's Garden: Tales Of Pappudom, The Magic Store of Nu-Cham-Vu and the historical book for children, Pazhassi Raja: The Royal Rebel. He is the great great grandson of the artist Raja Ravi Varma and grandson of Regent Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bayi, the last ruling Maharani of Travancore. He is married to Geeta Varma (poet, teacher and columnist) and has two children, Vinayak and Karthik.



## THIS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Time is running

Independence day is coming!

Flags and prayers

Remembering those soldiers!

On this very occasion

Our country became an independent nation !

But still we Indians are not living with freedom

Have buried ourselves in myths and customs !

No freedom to fight for our rights

No freedom to dream for future bright!

No freedom of choosing the path of life

No freedom to happily survive!

Still as of today we have given the power to others

And we are living under pressure!

If we really wish to celebrate Independence Day this year

First make yourself independent O'dear!

Let us promise on our own today

We will live this life with freedom every day!

Let this 15th August be something special

Let us make our own rules of battle!

Come on! Wake up all and one

Let us celebrate freedom with joy and fun!



**Sonia Gupta:** A dentist by profession, is a well-known name in English & Hindi literature. She is an established author of four English & Two Hindi poetry books. Her many poems and stories have been placed in various anthologies, magazines & newspapers. She has been awarded with various awards in Hindi literature and won many poetry competitions organised by various literary groups on facebook. Besides a poetess and doctor she is fond of paintings, singing, cooking, designing, knitting and teaching. Her many projects are coming soon.



## SUFFERING HEART VS BODY

"Hey! seems we shared identical suffering"

"Do you think so, no it's not?

Our injuries may be the same but not sufferings

True we both lost eyesight

But our context, event and purpose differ

You were having fun while met with accident

I was exercising my right to free speech

Your colleague playfully fired in your eye

I was targeted like many of my fellow Kashmiris

Yours was an accident so you forgave her

Mine was enmity, I am still nursing

You are cared and treated with love and compassion

I am looked at with disdain and awarded with exclusion

Your suffering is just physical

My whole existence is in question

My heart pains more than my eyes

Friend, am not undermining your pain

But don't trivialize mine as well"

I was dumbfounded with his grief and could only offer my  
prayer

May Allah be merciful and give our vision back

May Allah the Almighty nurse your heart to peace

May Allah the supreme again make Kashmir his abode

Amen



**Subhash Chandra Rai:** Nonconformist by birth, wearing emotions on sleeve. Enjoying path less travelled and being myself.



## SILENCE

Their silence was piercing  
As though the trees lay slumbering  
Clothed in beautiful auburn  
Not a single leaf out of turn.

Under the haze of the sullen sky  
In somnolence the air hung: dry  
Wrapped in a shroud of malaise  
Arrogant and of attitude blasé.

All around flowers bloomed in myriad hue

Sterile unperfumed dummy's few

Doleful plastic stiff yet very bright

Vacuously vacant yet just not right.

Trimmed and genetically monitored

A model showcase blatantly tutored

Without birds bees and butterflies

It silently looked a sham and a lie.

No chirruping no twittering no cheer

No droning no buzzing nothing to hear

Lost in the human melee

Fallen heaps in a silent scree.

Ghost cities glossy but bereft

Strangely silent eerie in a soundless cleft.



**Sudeshna Mukherjee:** She is an Economics Major. She is a poet, short story writer and painter. Her book of poems “Meanderings of the Mind” has been published. Many of her poems have been published in national and international anthologies, magazines and e-publications.



## **CLEANING**

After racing in the sky  
Like the after-school kids  
Breathless, screaming  
The rains---then left in a hurry;  
Drenching the meadows-n- plains  
And leaving vast and tiny  
Puddles that mirror  
A purified sky



**Sunil Sharma:** He is Mumbai-based senior academic, critic, literary editor and author with 18 published books: Six collections of poetry; two of short fiction; one novel; a critical study of the novel, and, eight joint anthologies on prose, poetry and criticism. He is a recipient of the UK-based Destiny Poets' inaugural Poet of the Year award---2012. His poems were published in the prestigious UN project: Happiness: The Delight-Tree: An Anthology of Contemporary International Poetry, in the year 2015. Sunil edits the English section of the monthly bilingual journal Setu published from Pittsburgh, USA:

<http://www.setumag.com/p/setu-home.html>

For more details, please visit the blog:

<http://www.drsunilsharma.blogspot.in/>



We hold our hands together  
as we hold our lives together,  
both frightened to let go.

We are blinded by our own lies  
and refuse to see  
the truth..  
  
about our relationship.

Hearts withstands mockery,  
pain and malice  
for long and even lonely times,  
as long there is hope for  
love.

A man, a child, a dream  
We want it all to be true -  
and eternity is measured  
in years.

In our engimatic anxiety  
all turns into conquests.  
We carry the fear  
within us -  
every day and every night -  
The faded horror  
of defeat.  
the shadow of empty hearts.



**Svanhild Løvli:** I'm a Norwegian poetess.



## THE WORLD IS MY OYSTER

The borrowed life of some impulse addict  
Has eaten up my life force, that I've earned.  
The bets of my gamble have eroded bit by bit,  
To give me a lesson; but nothing had I learnt.  
However, the ashes remained, I've to collect;  
And the scattered seeds in the aftermath of loss,  
For new field; where, I've to fight against ill fate.  
Then I'll irrigate the field for an affordable gross.  
It'll be like driving a car fitted with squared wheel,  
Or like propelling a ship along the darkest street.  
But, it'll give me opportunity to enflame my will,  
And, eventually, I'll testify my power in deep sit.

The world is my oyster, and, it'll be same for you.  
You may see the same, but, from my point of view.



**Swapan Kumar Rakshit:** He is an Indian poet who lives in Bankura, West Bengal. He teaches physics for his professional needs. However, he prefers to write poems especially sonnets. He wants to be acquainted with the universal mind through poetry.



## **ON GROWING OLD**

Growing old is not easy,  
No, not easy at all!  
It's a lot of letting go  
And a lot more holding in, too.  
Wisdom colors your head  
And holding in wets your bed!  
You have to be asked often,  
Have you had your medicines yet?  
And you answer almost truthfully, 'of course'  
When you really cannot recall  
If that was yesterday, today or not at all!

You remember the past only too well  
But quite forget where you are at now.  
You repeatedly recount events  
That the family knows by rote,  
In frustration however, you can't place  
The people at dinner, oh the disgrace.  
The best part however is you can just nod off  
Refusing to carry on conversations that matter not at all.



**Usha Chandrasekharan:** She is a believer in the power of the universe, in the power of positive energy, in the power of words, in the power of good intentions. She has two children both of good literary prowess, both creative in their own way.



## MIRROR GAMES

Her 3 AM date with her replica

Peeling off the filters

Scars that scorched from years ago

Hidden in her toothy grin

Dirt she flosses away in the quiet of the night

Contorted truths or woven lies?

Her corset hides from side to side

Her pear shape naked now

Her love handles she caresses

Her reflection unkind

Truth like those zillion luminous stars

Explode in the dark sea bed of reality

Left alone

She with her mirror's soliloquy



**Vandana Kumar:** She is a bon vivant who loves travelling, working with young minds and exploring creative possibilities beyond the ordinary. She has done her masters in History from Lady Shri Ram College and her Diplôme from the Alliance Française de Delhi. She is a French teacher in a couple of schools and private institutes and also translates for various publishing houses and corporates. An active member of various quiz clubs across

Delhi, she has a soft corner for Kolkata where she spent her childhood. Her various passions include singing, playing the piano, composing music and participating in local antakshari competitions. She describes herself as a dreamer...a wanderer and a certified incurable romantic...the romantic moorings worsened with all her fancy French studies. Poetry for her is her stress buster -her flight of fancy-and strangely – what keeps her rooted too.



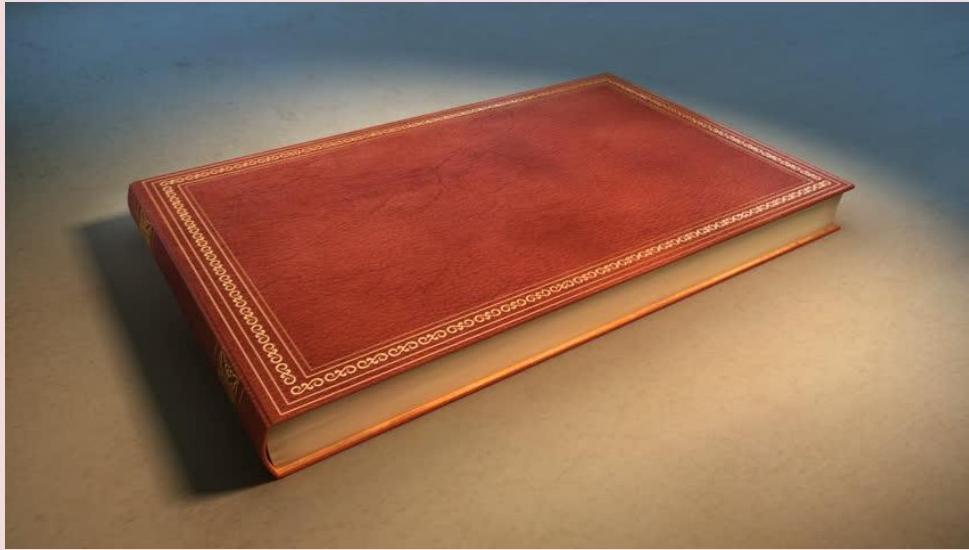
## **WORSHIP**

They tell me  
temples, churches and mosques  
are places of worship  
but I look into your eyes  
burning my skin like wildfire,  
at the same time  
freezing every single bone  
trembling inside me,  
making me wonder how many  
Goddesses and Gods  
you must embody

for a light like that  
but you tell me that it is because  
every soul is a prayer  
of a million chanting scars  
and love is the oldest god  
that meditates within.



**Vasanthi Swetha:** She is extremely passionate about the art of poetry, dance, reading and dreaming, and she believes that every poem that she writes is a result of a conversation with her soul.



## ALBUM

The camera clicks you smiling, standing at the edge,  
Flirting with danger and with the photographer,  
In your plaited hair and pleated skirt  
Your teeth-embracing braces and with beads  
Of sweat decorating your forehead.

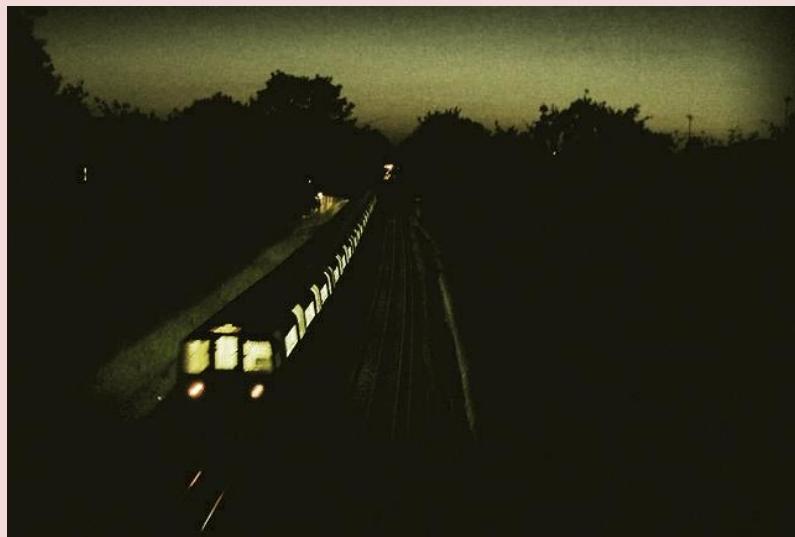
This was long before our palms accidentally touched  
In a library where you came to borrow books  
And I to catch your eye. This was long before  
Laughter slipped out of our lives  
Unnoticed like an uninvited wedding guest.

Now you look back at the album  
Like a child peering through barbed wire  
And your eyes reflect an innocence  
I last saw when grandmother, bent double  
With age and wisdom, holding a broom

In the background of your snap  
Shouting at you to move away from death,  
Moved on herself with her memories--  
And all the neighboring homes huddled together  
Sharing a common sorrow and you sobbed.



**Vijay Nair:** He is a retired as Associate Professor, Department of English, Government Victoria College Palakkad, Kerala. He taught English Language and Literature in various colleges for 31 years. His poems have appeared in several International Anthologies. He was awarded the Reuel International Prize for Writing & Literature in the year 2016.



## NIGHTSCAPE

As I rush northwards vertically  
I look up at the night sky  
to see the half-moon  
travelling with me.

Outside  
there is a shadow world  
passing by.  
Hillocks plains streams lanes  
palms shrubs trees woods  
half alive in the dim silver  
sometimes above

sometimes below

and sometimes

running with me.

A mountain looms

in the distance

comes close

turns and recedes

with a star twinkling all the while

on its brow.

Later I see the lone star

caught in a pool below.

Fear of the dark,

of the unknown

have made you

worship her as Kali.

You have lit lamps

to propitiate her

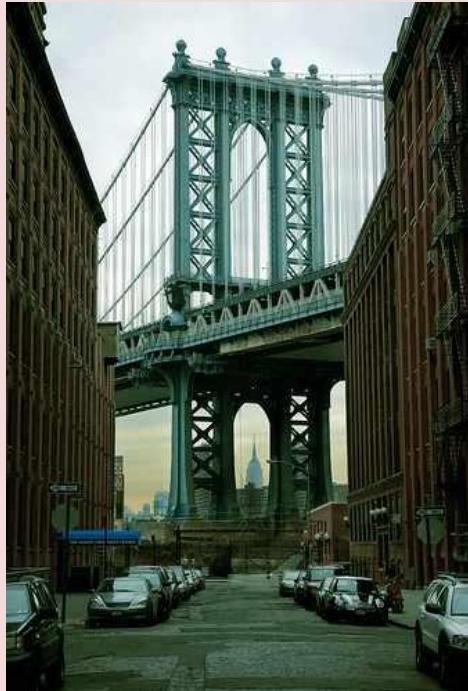
yet

as these go out one by one  
you curl up  
knowing your vulnerability.

The shadows within  
and without  
merge into  
one another  
seamlessly.



**Vineetha Mekkoth:** She is a poet, writer, translator, editor. Lives with her family in Calicut. Translates for the Kerala Sahitya Akademi. Has published poems in various national and international anthologies. Her poetry collection is soon to be published by Authorspress.



## **WASHINGTON STREET**

It is always, it seems, an inner-city street:  
lined with warehouses accentuated  
by cinderblock projects too concrete  
to induce dreams.

Purple-painted cement patios  
seem to bend under maroon velour couches  
filled with larger-than-life women  
fanning bandanna-wrapped faces while

their thin men huddle around tables  
drinking beer out of cans and  
playing cards for chump change.

A bus grumbles along

mixing diesel fumes with the exhaust  
of crack. Inside, a blue-tattooed  
ex-con tries seducing a girl in the seat nearby.

She talks of Jesus, the afterlife,

and her church. He promises to meet her there—  
although their “theres” are at odds. Still,  
he prays for what might happen after dark  
in a consecrated park

off Washington Street.



**William P. Cushing:** Bill Cushing returns to his New York City roots with a poem inspired by that point of origin along with other previous places he resided such as Baltimore and Los Angeles. In addition, this work was one of the many that enabled him to be recently selected as one of the "Top Ten L. A. Poets of 2017." Along with this piece, two other poems previously published in GloMag were part of the collection leading to that honor: "After el Nino" and "The Ancient Flocks of Wilson Street," a poem also featured in Lit For Life, an organization that features regional writings to be incorporated into the curricula of middle and high schools. Bill continues writing, teaching, reading, performing, and spending time with the family in Glendale, California.



## LADIES OF THE NIGHT

We are the ladies  
Of the night  
Dressed and ready  
For clientele we know not  
Picking our stand  
Each night across this city  
Of hope and despair.  
  
We live by lying  
On a bed unknown  
With sorrow suppressed inside  
And affliction bravely borne

We live by pleasing  
While the world is sleeping.  
It is hunger  
That has driven us here  
The mouths of dear ones  
To be fed with a square meal  
While the world hates us  
And extols those  
Who make us what we are.  
How we long for a better life  
This slap we know too well  
Lord we know we are for heaven  
For we are doing our time in hell.



**Zulfiqar Parvez:** Vice Principal Cum O Levels English Language Teacher, London Grace International School, Dhaka. I have done my Honours and Masters in English Language and Literature from the University of Rajshahi, and am the editor of Neeharika.





ciao! 😊